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Karpov Holds Moscow News Conference 15 Dec

'Text' on Forces Reduction

LD1512233888 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1445 GMT 15 Dec 88

["Viktor Karpov's Statement—Full Text"—TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow, 15 Dec (TASS)—USSR Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Karpov delivered the following statement at a news briefing here today:

Mikhail Gorbachev's UN speech and his submission of new Soviet disarmament initiatives, including the major unilateral steps the USSR has announced in the reduction of armed forces and arms in Europe and Asia, have essentially created a completely new political context for the discussion of disarmament issues.

Virtually all foreign reaction to Mikhail Gorbachev's UN speech and his meeting with the U.S. leadership has been of a totally positive tenor and assesses these events as a new and major foreign policy success for the Soviet Union, with long-term and significant political consequences.

The measures to reduce the Soviet Armed Forces and withdraw the tank formations and offensive weapons from East Europe are regarded unequivocally as specific evidence of the start of the restructuring of the USSR Armed Forces on the basis of a defensive military doctrine.

In this context I would like to draw particular attention to the fact that the tank divisions that are being withdrawan from the GDR, the CSSR, and Hungary are being disbanded, while the Soviet troops remaining in those countries for the time being will be reshaped and assume a defensive structure, and to the fact that assault landing and crossing equipment, that is, the equipment associated in West Europe precisely with the Soviet Armed Forces' offensive capabilities, are to be withdrawn.

All this is a convincing answer by the Soviet Union to the arguments about "a discrepancy between Moscow's words and deeds."

At the same time many observers ask specific questions about the fact that the measures mapped out by us in the United Nations need further specification—in the sense of making more precise the deadlines and the order of the withdrawal of specific divisions from European socialist countries, in the sense of clarifying the meaning of the reshaping of the defense structure to be given to the formations that are to remain there, and so on. There is the question of how it will be possible to ensure that the measures declared will be implemented. Wishes are being expressed that the measures for reducing the USSR Armed Forces and for the withdrawal of troops from the GDR, CSSR, and the Hungarian People's Republic, should be accompanied by the maximum degree of openness when they are implemented—notification about the beginning and end of the withdrawal of troops and combat machinery, invitation of observers, and so on.

In this connection I would like to inform you that in the USSR at present questions are being tackled regarding the development of a plan-schedule for reducing the USSR Armed Forces by 500,000 people for the period of 1989-90, which must envisage the disbanding of relevant units, including those withdrawn from the GDR, the CSSR, the Hungarian People's Republic, and also the People's Republic of Mongolia. Also, consideration is being given to an appropriate reduction in conscription of people for nonregular military service and determination of the categories and proportion of those to be discharged into the reserves; a timetable for the reduction within that period of 10,000 Soviet tanks, 8,500 artillery systems, and 800 operational aircraft, as well as a substantial reduction in the quantity of conventional weapons in the Asiatic part of the USSR; and a timetable for the reduction of the numbers of the Soviet Armed Forces and weapons on the territory of the European socialist countries—50,000 men and 5,000 tanks—which would provide for the withdrawal of assault-landing and a number of other formations and units, including landing-crossing units with their weapons and operational equipment. The procedure and timetable for the reshaping of the divisions remaining on the territory of the allied European countries and for their acquisition of a new defensive structure must also be specified.

We are also considering the question of seeing that all measures connected with unilateral reductions in the USSR's Armed Forces and weapons are carried out in conditions of maximum openness and glasnost, including dissemination of the necessary information about the timetable for conducting the measures, and providing the world public with the opportunity to ensure that all the reductions announced really do take place, including the invitation of foreign observers.

START Treaty Prospects

LD1512165288 Moscow TASS in English 1603 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 15 TASS—The Soviet side counts on the possibility of preparing a draft treaty on a 50 per cent reduction in strategic offensive arms in the course of 1989, provided the ABM Treaty is kept in the form in which it was signed in 1972, Viktor Karpov, USSR deputy foreign minister, said at a briefing here today.

In answer to questions he pointed out that at the Soviet-U.S. Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) "there is a solid basis which has been created as a result of the meetings between Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald

Reagan". This basis embodied in a START treaty draft which consists of a draft treaty proper, attendant documents as well as a memorandum on initial data.

A whole number of initial provisions which are inherent in the documents "give us ground to believe that the work to complete the preparation of the treaty can be done rather quickly", Karpov said.

There are, of course, complex matters, too. These are connected, first of all, with compliance with the ABM Treaty. There is the largest number of stumbling blocks in this issue but they exist not through the fault of the Soviet side. Those are mainly questions connected with the U.S. unwillingness to tackle problems pertaining to long-range sea launched missiles, the uncoordinated technical matters concerning an estimate of air-launched cruise missiles, limitations on heavy bombers and on mobile intercontinental ballistic missiles.

"However, these matters can be resolved soon, provided there is a willingness to do so", Karpov said.

Simultaneously headway along the road of reducing conventional arms and the armed forces, and drafting a START treaty is leading to the goal pursued by the Soviet Union: to achieve a radical reduction in the risk of war, to lower the level of military confrontation, and to lay the foundations of security in Europe and on a world scale, the USSR deputy foreign minister said.

U.S. Claims About Krasnoyarsk 'Trivial'

LD1512182988 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1626 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow, 15 Dec (TASS)—TASS military affairs observer Vladimir Chernyshev writes:

A U.S. State Department spokesman has stated that the construction of the Soviet radar station in the area of Krasnoyarsk is a violation of the ABM Treaty, that the station must be dismantled, and that the buildings with the receiving and transmitting equipment must be demolished and their foundations destroyed. According to him, the USSR's proposal to include the Krasnoyarsk radar station within the system of the world space organization and the invitation for foreign scientists to work there "does not suit" the United States because there are no guarantees that "foreign scientists will not be expelled at any time."

Such claims simply look trivial. Even though this station was intended for tracking space objects and its creation in no way came under the ABM Treaty, the USSR nevertheless showed good will, took into account the U.S. side's anxiety, and placed the radar station at the disposal of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

The 28 October 1988 statement of the Soviet Government expressed readiness to discuss with the United States and other concerned states specific measures which will make it possible to transform the Krasnoyarsk radar station into a center of international cooperation, including thorough dismantling and converting individual existing facilities and buildings.

All this was surely sufficient. Why destroy already created assets if they can serve purposes that are known to be peaceful and, what is more, are also essentially under international verification? If one draws an analogy with the fabrications of the State Department spokesman, the treaty on eliminating intermediate- and shorter-range missiles is also no guarantee at all against the United States deciding at any time to "expel" Soviet monitors [kontrolery] from U.S. territory and again starting up production at the intermediate-range missile works, which is being monitored.

At issue is not the Krasnoyarsk radar station. Evidently, certain circles in Washington have set themselves the aim of derailing the ABM Treaty. Washington is faced with the dilemma of either complying with this treaty or abandoning its plans to create an antiballistic missile defense system for the country. It is also not difficult to understand that the question of withdrawing from the ABM Treaty is not all that simple—Washingtdon is not likely to make any political capital out of this. That is why the lobbyists for SDI, which provides for the creation of an ABM defense for the country, are not averse to casting the Soviet side as the culprit "violating" the ABM Treaty. Noteworthy in this connection is the report of the political committee of the Republican faction in the Senate, which was published recently. Its authors bluntly raise the question as to whether the ABM Treaty now meets "U.S. interests." They recommend three specific methods of "finishing" with this treaty.

However, despite all these attempts, those who hope to convince the public that the Soviet Union may become an accessory to such a "ceremony" are profoundly mistaken. Our country firmly and consistently advocates strict compliance with the ABM Treaty without which, as the Soviet leadership has repeatedly warned, the reduction of strategic offensive armaments will also be impossible.

Cruise Missiles Destroyed at Arizona Air Base

Soviet Inspectors Arrive

LD1412163488 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0817 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] New York, 14 Dec (TASS)—A group of Soviet inspectors arrived on Tuesday at the U.S. Davis-Monthan Air Force Base (Arizona) to observe the procedure for destroying the latest batch of ground-launched cruise missiles. These medium-range missiles, which have a nuclear force of up to 200 kilotonnes, are being eliminated in accordance with the Soviet-U.S. INF Treaty.

The procedure for destroying the missiles is as follows: The missile, without the nuclear warhead and guidance systems, is placed on a special concrete platform. Its body is cut into two parts by powerful plasma cutters. The main body and the tail unit are separated. The missiles's protective casing is cut into two parts.

A batch of these nuclear weapons was destroyed in October of this year at the Davis-Monthan base. The second stage, for which 13 Soviet inspectors have arrived, begins today and is to be completed on Friday. During this period, the AP news agency notes, 43 ground-based cruise missiles are to be destroyed, as well as their protective containers and six mobile launching installations. Forty-one missiles and seven launch installations were destroyed in October.

According to the conditions of the INF Treaty, the United States is to destroy 443 ground-launched cruise missiles over 3 years. Many of these missiles were deployed in Western Europe; 403 'Pershing' medium-range missiles also are subject to destruction.

Series Destruction Completed

LD1612092088 Moscow TASS in English 0755 GMT 16 Dec 88

[Text] New York December 16 TASS—The elimination of a series of ground-launched cruise missiles was completed at the U.S. Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Arizona Thursday.

These medium-range missiles, capable of carrying 200-kiloton nuclear warheads, were destroyed under the Soviet-U.S. intermediate-range nuclear forces treaty.

Air Force spokesman Captain Mark Besich said a total of 43 cruise missiles with protective containers and six mobile launchers had been eliminated.

Forty-one missiles and seven launchers had been destroyed at the base in October.

Under the INF Treaty, the United States is to destroy, within three years, 443 ground-launched cruise missiles, many of which were deployed in Western Europe, and 403 intermediate-range Pershing missiles.

A group of 13 Soviet inspectors watched the elimination process.

Pershing Missile Systems Withdrawn From FRG

LD1512190188 Moscow TASS in English 1631 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Bonn December 15 TASS—The next nine Pershing-2 nuclear-missile systems were today withdrawn from West Germany and sent to the United States for destruction under the Soviet-U.S. treaty on eliminating intermediate- and shorter-range missiles. They were deployed at the U.S. military base in Neu-Ulm, Baden Wuerttemberg. The remaining 27 missiles should be moved out of West German territory before May 1991 as is also provided by the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.

Earlier, Pershing-2 nuclear-missile systems were removed in bundles in nine from U.S. military bases in Heilbronn and Mutlangen, Baden Wuerttemberg.

Last Cruise Missiles Removed From Belgium

PM1512143988 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 15 Dec 88 Morning Edition p 4

[Own correspondent V. Antonov dispatch under rubric "Reportage From the Scene of the Event": "Missiles Removed"]

[Excerpts] Brussels—The ceremony of dispatching the last batch of U.S. cruise missiles, which were stationed here in 1985, to the United States for their subsequent destruction in accordance with the provisions of the Soviet-U.S. Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate- and Shorter-Range Missiles has been held at the air force base in Florennes. [passage omitted]

"Send-offs often have a touch of sadness about them. On this occasion, however, bidding farewell to the last of the cruise missiles deployed in our territory, our feelings are different; we feel hope that the world will become a safer place." This is how Belgian National Defense Minister Guy Coeme began his speech at the official ceremony. He stressed that the Soviet-U.S. Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate- and Shorter-Range Missiles is an exceptionally important stage on the way to improving East-West relations.

M. Glitman, U.S. ambassador to Belgium, noted that the military base in Florennes will be the first such NATO base in Western Europe from which all U.S. cruise missiles previously deployed here are being removed.

Colonel K. Chestin, commander of the 485th Tactical Missile Wing, told journalists that eight live missiles and four training missiles have already been removed from the base. After the last eight missiles have been dispatched to the United States, a large proportion of the U.S. military servicemen stationed here, of whom there are 1,200, will leave the base. Some 300 U.S. soldiers and officers will remain in Florennes for the time needed to carry out the inspections stipulated by provisions on monitoring observance of the Soviet-U.S. Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate- and Shorter-Range Missiles.

...When the journalists were leaving the base, there was a demonstration by Belgian antiwar movements at its gates. Members of the National Committee for Action for Peace and Development and the Flemish Committee for Action Against Nuclear Weapons— the country's two leading pacifist organizations that have actively opposed the stationing of U.S. nuclear missile weapons on Belgian soil—had come here to mark this momentous event, the last cruise missiles being sent back to the United States.

Talks With U.S. on Nuclear Tests End in Geneva

LD1512225088 Moscow TASS in English 2225 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Geneva December 16 (TASS)—The regular round of Soviet-U.S. full-scale negotiations on limiting and halting nuclear tests ended Thursday [15 December] by producing positive results. It was opened in Geneva on August 29.

As a result of the successful holding of the experiment to monitor nuclear explosions at test ranges in Nevada and Semipalatinsk, the two countries' experts prepared a document which, in their view, provides the basis for getting agreement on measures to verify the 1974 treaty on limiting underground nuclear explosions. The sides also harmonized the draft of a new protocol to this treaty which will serve as the basis for work at the next round of the negotiations.

The chief negotiators of the Soviet and U.S. delegations released a joint statement saying that their work passed in a businesslike and constructive atmosphere and was notable for a high pace which both delegations intend to retain also at the next round.

Chemical Weapons Talks End in Geneva 15 Dec

LD1512194288 Moscow TASS in English 1921 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Geneva December 15 TASS—Another round of multi-party talks on chemical weapons, held within the framework of the disarmament conference, ended here today.

The parties continued the discussion of provisions of the future convention on the prohibition and destruction of these weapons of mass annihilation.

The talks will be resumed on January 17 next year.

The 10th round of parallel bilateral consultations between the USSR and the United States on banning chemical weapons also ended in Geneva today.

The consultations are held in keeping with an agreement reached at the Geneva summit in November 1985.

Sakharov, Others React to USSR Arms Proposal

PM1212113588 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 11 Dec 88 Morning Edition p 5

[Unattributed feature citing reaction of Soviet citizens to forces reductions under the heading "The World is Ripe for Cooperation; Some Opinions on the Question of Reducing the Armed Forces"—first two paragraphs are editorial introduction]

[Text] The Soviet Union's decision to cut its Armed Forces has prompted an enormous response not only abroad but also in our own country.

"Do you think the United States and NATO will take an understanding attitude to the Soviet Union's unilateral armed forces cuts and follow our example?" People answered as follows to this question from IZVESTIYA:

Writer B. Vasilyev:

It is hard to write: I feel as if my soul were flowing with tears. Not only tears of pain and grief caused by the great tragedy in Armenia, but also tears of pride for the whole human race. Elements most terrible have shaken the whole globe, which have touched all countries and all nations, and immediately millions of friendly hands stretched out to the Armenian people. Suddenly, old grudges, social differences, threats, state systems, and ideological differences have all been forgotten. The presidents of great countries, the monarchs of small states, prime ministers, and heads of religious organizations are sending their sincere condolences, medicines, and financial aid. British firemen, French mine rescue teams, Italian and American specialists are today winging their way in the same direction. The world has remembered fraternity and solidarity.

How strangely it has all worked out: M.S. Gorbachev's impassioned appeal from the world's most prestigious rostrum to turn the policy of arming into a policy of disarmament, which he underpinned with the example of making substantial cuts in our armed forces—and then this universal demonstration of humanity in the face of an enormous national disaster. This means that we are ready. We are all, the whole world, all countries morally prepared for real cooperation and selfless assistance. The crushing blow dealt from beneath the earth has been a test of humanity and a rehearsal for states to meet the future free of fear, threats, and pressure of force. It means that it is both possible and necessary to follow this example and liberate the bright energy of youth from constricting military uniforms.

Legend tells how a warrior, armed to the teeth, wandered into an orchard and wanted to eat an apple. Hampered by his armour, he tried to cut off the fruit with his sword, but only the splintered branches and broken foliage showered down on his head. "If you want an apple," the gardener said, "lay down your sword. Apples are picked with hands."

So let us lay down our swords and pluck the apple for all people on earth. We have already proven to ourselves that we are human.

Academician A. Sakharov:

Before M.S. Gorbachev's address in New York, I was asked whether the Soviet Union is really interested in disarmament and whether its initiatives are not simply a maneuver and an attempt to gain military or strategic superiority. For the Soviet Union, disarmament is an essential, organic element of restructuring. It is not a flash in the pan but one of its main aspects.

I feel that the unilateral cuts in the Soviet Army are extremely important. This step will fundamentally change the situation in the world. And, in particular, it will make it possible in the future for all countries to totally reject nuclear weapons, which are a threat to mankind's existence. In my view, M.S. Gorbachev's initiative helps progress in this direction. The Soviet decision has colossal significance.

I think that it will bear fruit over a long period of time and the West's reaction to it will gradually become clear. But what I have read so far in THE NEW YORK TIMES shows great interest in this proposal and, at the same time, a certain amount of caution. Well, that is natural, if you consider all the complex relations that exist in the world.

IZVESTIYA correspondents asked the same question of Muscovites and guests to the capital who were in Pushkin Square. Here are the opinions of some of them:

G.I. Plyushev, military doctor (Moscow):

I hope that realism will prevail. After all, the Western countries are also led by intelligent, experienced politicians. It is clear to most people in the world that the arms race has reached its limits and that it would be senseless to continue. Although they say "beauty will save the world," I believe—and this belief is borne out by the entire course of human development—that the world will, nevertheless, be saved by reason. The Soviet Union's decision to make cuts in its armed forces was dictated by reason and a sense of responsibility. The world understands and appreciates this.

As to whether the United States will take real steps in response, I believe that will depend on the stand taken by the new administration. In short—let us wait and see.

A.V. Mayorov, a student who comes from the city of Kumertau:

The NATO countries believe the Soviet Union has a significant superiority in terms of the size and technical equipment of its army. And, in my opinion, we do have a considerable advantage in tanks, for example. An impressive tank strike force is concentrated on the western borders of Warsaw Pact member-countries. So I feel the Soviet Union is right in its decision to reduce the number of tank divisions in the European socialist countries. Our security and defense capability will not suffer because of it.

Although the NATO countries are assessing positively this initiative, I do not think they will follow our example in the near future. But in the longterm our step must contribute to further progress in the disarmament process and to the establishment of trust between East and West.

Bloc, PRC Responses to Gorbachev Speech Cited

PM1312085588 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 12 Dec 88 Second Edition pp 1,5

[PRAVDA-TASS roundup: "High Assessment of Soviet Initiatives"]

[Excerpts] Budapest, 11 Dec—[passage omitted] The Hungarian State Assembly Foreign Affairs Commission has welcomed M.S. Gorbachev's statement on a unilateral reduction in the Soviet Armed Forces. A resolution adopted by the Hungarian parliamentary commission assessed the Soviet initiative as a world political act of historic significance. The announcement of the armed forces reductions, the document stresses, is a practical implementation of the new political thinking and the Soviet Union's new military-political concept. [passage omitted]

Bucharest—With regard to the essence of the new Soviet initiatives, Romanian newspapers note M.S. Gorbachev's words to the effect that six tank divisions will be withdrawn by 1991 from the territory of the GDR, the CSSR, and Hungary by agreement with Warsaw Pact allies, and then disbanded.

The press here also notes the Soviet leader's proposals aimed at settling the conflict in Afghanistan.

Shanghai—The speech made by M.S. Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, at the United Nations is the focus of attention for China's mass media. Naturally, in the course of meetings and conversations between a delegation from the Soviet UN Relief Association and Chinese spokesmen the main topic was the exchange of opinions on the broad range of new initiatives from the land of the Soviets that have drawn a profound world response.

"A very important speech and interesting proposals—that is my first impression from reading Comrade Gorbachev's speech," Liu Zhenyuan, vice mayor of Shanghai, said to a PRAVDA correspondent. "If it proves possible to put military industry on a civilian footing—that's a very very difficult job—this will be an extremely weighty contribution to strengthening peace throughout the world. Both China and the Soviet Union, which are resolving complex tasks of economic development, need peace. The new Soviet initiatives are also geared toward this. They are consonant with the corresponding proposals from the PRC. [passage omitted].

Military Expert Cited on Forces Reduction

LD1312202088 Moscow TASS in English 1912 GMT 13 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 13 TASS—The military meaning of the Soviet initiatives for disarmament advanced by Mikhail Gorbachev from the rostrum of the 43rd U.N. General Assembly session, is in lending a defensive nature to the USSR Armed Forces, General Geliy Batenin, a military expert of the CPSU Central Committee, said today in a talk with TASS diplomatic correspondent Vadim Biryukov. "What is at issue is changing the structure of our Armed Forces rather than disbanding several divisions. Some important elements are withdrawn from this structure—tanks, artillery pieces, in part, long-range attack aircraft and helicopters—as a result of which an offensive potential of our Army is slashed".

Reducing the strength of the Soviet Armed Forces by 500,000 men and also pulling out six tank divisions from the conventional line of contact with an enemy is an action which is significant in its scope, the military expert holds. Tactical mobile groups, which are viewed as an important sign of the Army's offensive capability, are removed.

The Soviet peace initiatives are meant to bring the structure of the Armed Forces in conformity with the ideas which underlie the Soviet Union's peaceful foreign policy, General Batenin said.

The unilateral reduction of the USSR Armed Forces and armaments is not the first but a rather large and real contribution of the Soviet Union to the cause of building a "common European home", Batenin stressed. In making unilateral reductions, the Soviet Union does not attach any pre-conditions to them. But it is justified in expecting similar steps on the part of the North Atlantic alliance. Logic prompts that the NATO countries could cut their conventional armaments on the continent in the interests of lowering the level of military confrontation, the military expert believes. Especially those of them in which there is asymmetry in their favour, for instance, in attack aviation.

Kashlev Notes Effect of Gorbachev Speech

LD1412161888 Moscow Television Service in Russian 1230 GMT 14 Dec 88

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Our correspondent interviewed Comrade Kashlev, head of the Soviet delegation at the Vienna meeting of CSCE member-states.

[Begin Kashlev recording] One can say without exaggeration that Mikhail Sergeyevich's speech—his profound thoughts on the variety and interrelatedness of the entire world, the world as a whole; about the global nature of the problems arising now, first and foremost the problem of mankind's survival; about the priority of human values; and about the search for a consensus common to all mankind in resolving the global problems that arise—has had an enormous effect here. All this is extremely important. The rejection of force and the threat of force, freedom of choice, the diversity of the development of states and societies in our time—all these are things that will be examined in a serious way. The Soviet Union confirmed its preparedness to do all it can to reduce the level of military confrontation in Europe, the most arms-saturated region in the world. [end recording]

Akhromeyev To Serve as 'Top' Government Adviser
LD1512134188 Moscow TASS in English 1331 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 15 TASS—"Marshal Sergey Akhromeyev's resignation from the post of chief of the general staff of the Soviet Armed Forces and first deputy defence minister, is in no way connected with the Soviet troop reductions announced by Mikhail Gorbachev at the United Nations," Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Karpov said here today.

Replying to questions at a briefing, he remarked that Marshal Akhromeyev resigned on grounds of health.

Karpov emphasised that Akhromeyev's vast experience will be used in the future. The retired marshal will serve as adviser at top government bodies.

Gerasimov Gives Moscow News Briefing 16 Dec

Shevardnadze's Japan Visit
LD1612142488 Moscow TASS in English 1418 GMT 16 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 16 TASS—The Soviet side hopes that the forthcoming official visit to Japan by Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, slated for December 18-21, will make a weighty contribution to improving Soviet-Japanese relations, a Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman stated at a briefing here today.

Gennadiy Gerasimov, head of the ministry's Information Directorate, said that the visit was also called upon to help deepen mutual understanding and broaden interaction and cooperation between the Soviet Union and Japan in the interests of the peoples in the two countries, the cause of peace and security in the Asian-Pacific region and the entire world.

During his trip to Japan, Shevardnadze will discuss in what will be a regular consultative meeting with Japanese Foreign Minister Sosuke Uno issues of Soviet-Japanese relations and international problems of mutual interest.

It is also planned to have a conversation with Japanese Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita.

Gerasimov said that a joint communique was expected to be adopted on the results of the visit.

U.S.-PLO Dialogue
LD1612143888 Moscow TASS in English 1431 GMT 16 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 16 TASS—The constructive and sympathetic atmosphere for the events in the Middle East, which prevailed at a session of the U.N. General Assembly in Geneva which considered the Palestine question, created favourable conditions for the PLO's new important steps, head of the Soviet Foreign Ministry Information Directorate Gennadiy Gerasimov said at a news briefing here on Friday.

These steps, he continued, enjoyed nearly universal support from the U.N. member countries and ensured prerequisites for starting a substantive dialogue between the United States and the PLO.

However, Gennadiy Gerasimov stressed, in the current situation it is not enough to maintain dialogue for the sake of dialogue. "What is required is systematic, concentrated efforts that would ensure real progress, a genuine breakthrough towards a comprehensive and just solution of the Middle East problem."

The Soviet Union, the Soviet spokesman said, stands for immediate implementation of the resolutions adopted at the session, for an immediate start of preparatory work within the United Nations Security Council aiming at convening of the international conference on the Middle East.

Perez de Cuellar Gives Reception for Gorbachev
PM0912121588 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 9 Dec 88 Second Edition p 2

[TASS report: "Reception at United Nations"]

[Text] New York, 8 December—UN Secretary General J. Perez de Cuellar held a reception on Wednesday in honor of M.S. Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, and R.M. Gorbacheva. The reception was attended by A.N. Yakovlev, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo and secretary of the CPSU Central Committee; E.A. Shevardnadze, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo and USSR foreign minister, and other people accompanying them.

The reception was attended by D. Caputo, president of the 43d UN General Assembly session and Argentine minister of foreign affairs and worship; eminent statesmen and politicians; representatives of the business and public circles of the United States and other countries; and the heads of missions accredited to the United Nations.

M.S. Gorbachev and J. Perez de Cuellar exchanged speeches.

Greeting the leader of the USSR, the UN secretary general said:

Your Excellency President Gorbachev, Mrs Gorbacheva! On behalf of the United Nations I warmly welcome you to its headquarters. We have awaited your visit a long time. It confirms your resolute support for the United Nations. Your speech today was outstanding in terms of its vision of the world and the far-reaching proposals and solutions it contains. The world is entering a period rich in opportunities and hope, a period of creation and many promises. Its leaders are moving away from relations of rivalry and advancing toward relations of partnership.

You have made an exceptional personal contribution to all this, Mr General Secretary. I thank you for that and wish you and Mrs Gorbacheva and the peoples of the Soviet Union peace and prosperity.

M.S. Gorbachev stated:

Mr UN Secretary General, esteemed Mrs Perez de Cuellar! Friends!

I greet in you the representatives of the entire world community; I greet you on behalf of the peoples of our country, the people who have set themselves tremendous goals and embarked on great deeds and who are giving their lives, thoughts, efforts, and knowledge to this. I greet you on behalf of the Soviet people, who are profoundly devoted to peace.

Everything said today from the UN rostrum is not the fruit of improvisation or facile arguments; it is profoundly considered and nurtured. And we wanted to convey this, using the world's most representative forum.

We believe the time has come for new, fruitful work by the United Nations.

On the basis of the principles of equality we will make a constructive contribution to UN affairs to improve international relations and strengthen cooperation among all peoples.

I thank you for your warm words to me and the Soviet Union and for your high assessment of our policy. We will be consistent. I thank you.

M.S. Gorbachev's speech was welcomed by tumultuous applause from the representatives of the world community.

Sakharov Says Gorbachev 'Deserves' Support

PM1212124188 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 12 Dec 88 Morning Edition p 3

[Own correspondent Yu. Kovalenko dispatch "Forty Years Later"]

[Text] Paris—Palais Chaillot—the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the UN General Assembly, was proclaimed here 10 December 1948. Today, exactly 40 years later, celebrations to mark this anniversary were held at the Palais.

They were attended by President F. Mitterrand of France; J. Perez de Cuellar, UN secretary general; F. Mayor, director general of UNESCO; and prominent statesmen, politicians, and public figures from varius countries. Among them was the widow of President Salvador Allende of Chile. The Soviet delegation included Academician A.D. Sakharov, Academician Yu. Lisitsyn of the USSR Academy of Medical Sciences, writer D. Granin, and others.

Today, human rights are one of the main topics covered in the French press. R. Badinter, chairman of the French Constitutional Council, notes in an interview with LE MONDE the substantial progress which has been achieved in this sphere.

At the same time, the newspaper LIBERATION emphasizes our planet is still far from translating the principles proclaimed in the Universal Declaration into practice. "Torture and reprisals are still widespread," a PSF [French Socialist Party] statement says, "child labor continues to be exploited, and in a number of regions of the world the majority of the population is illiterate. The Republic of South Africa is stubbornly trying to swim against the current by retaining apartheid—an open wound on mankind's conscience."

The Soviet delegation attending the festivities to mark the 40th anniversary of the Universal Declaration gave a press conference at the Soviet Embassy in Paris.

Touching on the processes of restructuring and democratization in Soviet society, A.D. Sakharov emphasized that his position on these questions has been and remains constructive. In his opinion, restructuring is in its initial stage. It is facing great difficulties in the economic sphere, which are mostly of a fundamental nature. "I am convinced," he stressed, "that the administrative edict system is a completely dead-end system. It is doomed to failure and it must be discarded. I am often asked whether restructuring is not fraught with danger for the West. If it leads to the Soviet Union's economic progress and its acquisition of all types of the latest technology, will the Soviet Union not then present a threat to the West? I have always believed, quite to the contrary, that it would be a failure of restructuring that would be dangerous for the West, leading to a regression which would result in destabilization of the situation in the USSR and consequently destablization throughout the world. This would not merely be a return to stagnation—the pendulum always swings to the other extreme. The equilibrium in the world would be disrupted. I am saying this because restructuring must be given all-around support from the West, but this support should not be unconditional."

Sakharov said further: The fate of our country has developed in such a way that a great deal depends on Gorbachev himself. "I believe that he is an outstanding and sincere man who deserves trust and support."

Speaking about human rights, Sakharov pointed out that their full realization is an extraordinarily difficult task for any state. "As I have said before," he noted, "we are in the initial stage of restructuring, but the trend, despite individual zigzags, is in the right direction. We have achieved bigger progress in this sphere than we had expected. But not everything has been done yet."

During the press conference which was attended by more than 200 journalists from various countries, A.D. Sakharov issued an appeal to all international organizations, and in particular the Red Cross, the WHO, and others, to provide all possible aid to Armenia. It is necessary to bring in volunteers from all over the world to help in the rescue effort. In such a tragic situation as this, the Soviet academician stressed, all questions pertaining to interethnic conflicts between Armenians and Azeris must take second place.

Human Rights Declaration Anniversary Noted

LD0912235188 Moscow TASS in English 2141 GMT 9 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 10 TASS—By TASS diplomatic correspondent:

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights whose 40th anniversary is observed on December 10 is highly appraised in the Soviet Union.

Delivering an address at the United Nations on December 7, Mikhail Gorbachev, general secretary of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party and president of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, said that "the most fitting way for a state to observe this anniversary of the declaration is to improve its domestic conditions for respecting and protecting the rights of its own citizens."

What is being done in the Soviet Union in this direction in the framework of perestroyka underway in the country?

A whole series of new laws has been or is being drafted in the USSR. Many of these laws are to go into effect as early as in 1989. Their main characteristic feature is that they suit the highest standards from the viewpoint of the ensurance of an individual's rights. The legislative acts that have been or are being formulated include the laws on the freedom of conscience, on glasnost, on public organizations and associations. The draft new laws are to incorporate additional guarantees precluding any forms of persecution for political and religious reasons. For instance, there are no persons convicted for political or religious views in the places of detention in the Soviet Union now.

The West has long been accusing the Soviet Union of the violation of human rights as regards the exit from the USSR. This problem is now being resolved in a new way, in a humane spirit, envisaging also the departure abroad for family reunions. The information of the visa office of the USSR Ministry of the Interior indicates that as many as 28,000 Soviet citizens left for permanent residence abroad last year. More than 77,000 citizens, including children, were given the permission for exit within ten months of the current year. Only 1.4 per cent of the number of the applications for exit visas were turned down.

"Overall, this is our credo: Political problems must be solved only by political means, human problems, only in a humane way", Mikhail Gorbachev said in his address to the United Nations.

Conference on Human Rights Opens in Moscow

LD1312214488 Moscow TASS in English 1921 GMT 13 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 13 TASS—An international scientific conference, "Human Rights in Mankind's History and in the Contemporary World", opened in Moscow today. The meeting, which was timed for the 40th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the approaching bicentenary of the declaration of the rights of man and citizen, proclaimed by the French Revolution, brought together eminent lawyers, public figures and politicians from 15 countries.

The participants in the meeting observed a minute of silence in remembrance of the people who perished as a result of the earthquake in Armenia.

Overcoming the effects of natural disasters and giving all-round aid to those suffered is the concern of the entire world community. A powerful relief effort for victims of the destructive earthquake in Armenia demonstrates that the world is turning toward recognition of the priority of universally-shared values, said Joe Nordmann, a French scientist who heads the International Association of Democratic Lawyers. The trouble of one nation is not the trouble of it alone.

In their speeches participants in the forum noted that the issues of a national and international legal mechanism of observing and protecting human rights are moved to the fore at the present stage of the development of civilization. They assume particular importance for the Soviet Union when transformations in its economic and political systems are effected.

Touching on international cooperation in tackling humanitarian issues, delegates to the forum pointed out that the problems of survival in the nuclear world, ecology, and protection of cultural values, which are common to the whole of mankind, are an inalienable part of human rights irrespective of the differences in ideology.

Conference Ends

LD1512195088 Moscow TASS in English 1815 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 15 TASS—Participants in the international scientific conference "Human Rights in Mankind's History and in the Contemporary World" believe that international cooperation in the humanitarian field among states with differing social systems is not only possible but necessary. The conference which brought together lawyers from 15 Eastern and Western countries drew to an end here today.

On the final day an exchange of views was held on creating an international concept of human rights. Given all the divergencies of the views articulated, speakers noted that it was quite possible to elaborate a common concept on this problem. They unanimously pointed out that the movement of civilization along the road of progress was impossible without recognition of the unique nature of human personality, its requirements, rights and obligations.

Speakers at a news conference today noted that human rights was a global problem of our time, it was vitally important to all nations and states. At the forum the question was raised about the need to adopt new documents in the field of human rights, which meet the interests of all countries and peoples.

If earlier emphasis during discussions was made on differences between the socialist and Western human rights concepts, the latest international meetings on this issue are held under the sign of the quest for a common approach, Metropolitan of Odessa and Kherson Sergiy stressed.

Asbjoern Eide, director of the Norwegian Human Rights Institute, said that the revival of cultural values in contemporary society can serve as a real foundation for a constructive dialogue and cooperation of representatives of countries with differing social systems.

Speakers at the news conference noted that participants in the Moscow meeting succeeded in rising above ideological differences and find reliance in universally-shared values.

Correction to Chernavin Article on Pacific Policy

The following correction pertains to the item headlined "Naval Commander Critical of U.S. Pacific Plans," published in the 8 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, page 7:

Column one, paragraph five, line four: ...craft, including 4 aircraft-carrying ships [avianesushchiye corabli]; 376 submarines; 96 cruisers... (changing words "aircraft carriers" to "aircraft-carrying ships," adding vernacular in editorial note)

United States & Canada

Reagan Authorizes Direct Dialogue With PLO

OW1512133888 Moscow Television Service in Russian 1235 GMT 15 Dec 88

[From "The World Today" program, presented by Igor Goranskiy]

[Text] The United States has made the decision to enter into direct dialogue with the PLO. This has been stated in an official announcement made by U.S. President Reagan distributed in Washington on Wednesday. The document points out in particular that the PLO has clearly acknowledged the right of the state of Israel to exist, condemned terrorism, and accepted the UN Security Council resolutions. These were the main conditions the United States required for entering into talks with the Palestinian leadership.

At a news conference on Wednesday evening, U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz announced that he had instructed the U.S. ambassador to Tunisia to begin talks with PLO representatives. [video shows George Shultz speaking at the news conference]

However, Shultz stressed that the position of the Washington administration in regard to the normalization of the Middle East conflict has not changed. According to him, the United States still aims to achieve overall peace in the region.

Reagan, Bush on U.S. Dialogue

LD1512234388 Moscow TASS in English 2333 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Washington December 16 TASS—U.S. President Reagan on Thursday [15 December] assured Israel that its decision to start a direct dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) did not mean that the United States refused to ensure Israel's security. "We have made it very plain that we have not retreated one inch from our position of guaranteeing the safety" of the Jewish state, the President said responding to newsmen's questions in the White House today.

At the same time, Reagan pointed out that he would not hesitate to "break off communications" with the PLO if it reneged on its declarations to renounce terrorism and accept Israel's right to exist. He also said that the United States did not intend to recognize a Palestinian state "because there is no such thing as of now".

The U.S. decision is known to have drawn ire in Tel Aviv. In this connection, Reagan was asked a direct question on whether the beginning of talks with the PLO on reaching a settlement was real at a time when Israel refused outright to enter into any contacts with that organisation. The President answered: "The ultimate solution does not depend on outsiders or us".

Responding to a question on whether, in his view, Israel was ready, in its turn, to recognize the U.N. Security Council resolutions which call for the withdrawal of Tel Aviv troops from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, Reagan answered: I think, yes.

Reagan made these remarks during brief meetings with reporters before the beginning of talks with Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Ozal and Italian Prime Minister Ciriaco De Mita.

President-elect George Bush, who was present at the meetings, said in his turn that he supported the President's decision. Bush, however, was very cautious in his pronouncements and made it clear that he did not intend to assume any commitments with respect to a dialogue with the PLO prior to the inauguration on January 20. "I support the President's decision. Let's see how things evolve", he said. Bush stressed that he wanted to see direct talks, for instance, between King Husayn of Jordan and Israelis. He said that on January 21 he would spell out what he intended to do.

Reagan Receives Turkish Prime Minister Ozal

LD1512235688 Moscow TASS in English 2343 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Washington December 16 TASS—President Reagan met at the White House on Thursday [15 December] with Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Ozal who came to the United States on a private visit. According to a White House spokesman, they discussed East-West relations. Reagan briefed the Turkish premier on his recent meeting in New York with Mikhail Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and president of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

The talks also focused on bilateral relations between the USA and Turkey and the decision of the Reagan administration to start a dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organisation. After the meeting with the President, Prime Minister Ozal told reporters that he considered that decision to be right.

The Turkish prime minister already held talks with U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz on Wednesday. Turgut Ozal meets with U.S. President-elect George Bush on Friday.

U.S. Investment in PRC Continues To Grow

OW1612002388 Moscow Television Service in Russian 1235 GMT 15 Dec 88

[From "The World Today" program, presented by Igor Goranskiy]

[Text] Bush's personnel selections to his administrative team give rise to expectations that the lengthy and bitter struggle centering around the direction of U.S. foreign policy waged between the Republicans and the Democrats will lose its edge. The Democrats, it appears, are prepared to work and cooperate with the Bush administration in solving most important international problems, admittedly with the proviso that George Bush does not find himself in the grip of the small, but nevertheless, dangerous, extreme right of his party. Besides, there is a feeling in the United States that Gorbachev's reforms and proposals are creating an atmosphere conducive to cooperation with the Soviet Union. This also could ensure broad support on the part of both parties.

Consensus is also expected on policy decisions regarding China, human rights issues, and the renewal of the obligation to strive for normalization in the Middle East.

U.S. business, a decade after the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the United States, has finally entered this largest-in-the-world consumer goods market. On any given day a Chinese businessman can have a shave with a Gillette razor, catch a Boeing to Beijing or other parts of the country, lunch on Kentucky Fried Chicken, and meet his joint enterprise partner at the Sheraton Hotel near China's Great Wall.

China today ranks as the United States' 13th-largest trading partner. In 1988 the volume of bilateral trade totaled $12 billion. Ten years ago, on 16 December 1978, when it was announced that the United States had established diplomatic relations with China, many understood that what China needed was means of production and the latest equipment rather than consumer goods imports. Now, more than 400 joint Sino-U.S. enterprises are operating in the country. The United States also happens to be, among all Western countries, the largest investor in China. This year alone the United States invested more than $3 billion in the PRC economy.

The same happy prospects are now presenting themselves in U.S.-USSR relations. But for this to achieve fruition, much work is needed.

U.S. Using Money, Aid To Pressure Somalia

EA1512185388 Moscow International Service in Somali 1600 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Commentary by Vladimir Borisov]

[Text] Reports reaching us from Africa speak of the search for oil in Somalia by U.S. firms. Although the search has been going for a decade, no positive results have yet been achieved. It cannot be predicted for certain when the search for oil, both inland and along the Somali coast, will end. This is the search for black gold, as it is commonly known these days. The United States had gotten a foothold in Somalia 8 years ago, when the Horn of Africa conflict was at its peak. The United States received the use of port facilities in Berbera in return for cash grants to the Somali Government. Many U.S. nuclear-powered ships have used the port of Berbera since then.

At the moment, many political changes are taking place in the Horn of Africa. The resumption of good relations between Somalia and Ethiopia is one example. But Somalia's policy of courting U.S. politicians and military officials has not changed. Military assistance cannot be relied upon at the present time. What is needed is economic assistance. The biggest problem facing Somalia is its foreign debt, which is said to be more than $1.8 billion. Somalia is not rich in mineral resources.

The Somali Democratic Republic has not yet attracted U.S. investors. But if oil should be found in Somalia, things will change rapidly. At present the U.S. Government is spending money in Somalia, which is rather like using a big stick. If Somalia follows U.S. policy, aid is increased, but when it refuses to comply it is given conditional aid. This is done through the IMF, which is controlled by the United States. At the beginning of this year Somalia was blacklisted by the IMF, which means that it cannot be given any sort of loan. Another reason why Somalia is being punished is that it could not fully comply with certain IMF conditions.

Somalia has been forced to surrender. This is proved by the big devaluation of Somalia's currency. The United States has agreed to reschedule part of Somalia's debt, amounting to $33.1 million. At the same time the financial differences between Somalia and the United States have eased. But could these differences not arise again?

China

PRC Cited on Support for PLO Peace Initiative

LD1512205188 Moscow TASS in English 2021 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Beijing December 15 TASS—By TASS correspondent Vladimir Kashirov:

Speaking today at a regular briefing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Li Zhaoxing said here today that the 3-point peace initiative put forth at the UN General Assembly by Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, was, in the opinion of China, positive and feasible. It fully expresses the sincere desire of the Palestinian state for achieving peace in the Middle East.

China hopes, he pointed out, that 'Arafat's initiative will meet with a positive response from all interested parties. Noting further that Israel's position on Palestine undoubtedly interferes with a solution of the Mid-East question, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman expressed the hope that Israel guided by the present international trend would take steps conducive to the peace process in the Middle East.

PRC Seeking 'Objective Assessment' of Stalin

PM1512151788 Moscow NEDELYA in Russian No 49 5-11 Dec (Signed to Press 7 Dec 88) p 5

[Article by Vladimir Ganshin under the rubric "Cooperation": "At Sinologists' Congress. Beijing University Professor's Opinion"]

[Text] Moscow—The First Congress of the All-Union Association of Sinologists was held the other day under the auspices of the USSR Academy of Sciences Far East Institute. Taking part in it were scientists from many of our country's cities representing academic and teaching institutions and organizations engaged in Chinese studies. Specialists from the PRC, including Professor Liu Keming of Beijing University, deputy chairman of the Chinese Society for the Study of the USSR and East European Countries, were guests of the congress.

I spoke with Comrade Liu Keming in the interval between congress sessions.

"Our society was set up in 1982 on the basis of institutes and departments studying the Soviet Union and the East European countries," the professor said. "The experience accumulated in these countries is important for both the theory and practice of our reforms. Objective, businesslike research into the processes of modern socialism and comparisons of the tasks being resolved will promote the improvement of mutual understanding and friendship—so states the society's charter. Today the society has 1,800 members drawn from 340 Chinese organizations and establishments, including scientific research institutes of the PRC Social Sciences Academy, the PRC Foreign Ministry, and the Beijing and People's Universities.

"We are devoting our main attention to the restructuring taking place in the USSR, to the political and economic changes in the structure of Soviet society, and to the materials of the CPSU Central Committee June (1987) Plenum and the 19th all-union party conference. We have many common problems, and the utilization of each other's experience will make it possible to avoid repeating mistakes and will be of mutual benefit. The research being done in the USSR into the theoretical problems of socialism is interesting and useful, in our opinion. Our views are largely similar or close in the sphere of new political thinking, too. We attach particular importance to the reassessment of certain historical events and the role of individuals in world history and in the development of Sino-Soviet relations. The fate of figures such as Bukharin, Stalin, and Khrushchev, and new documents that have become available for study thanks to glasnost attract our attention. For instance, an objective assessment of Stalin's activity from the standpoint of the present-day level of historical science is very necessary. We are holding seminars and conferences on these subjects.

"The creation [illegible] years ago of the Soviet Sinologists Association and its current cooperation with our society in my view promote better understanding between us and are conducive to the study of joint experience.

"I am optimistic about the prospects for Sino-Soviet relations. Our relations are now developing progressively. I am referring to trade, economic, scientific, technical, and cultural contacts. The well-disposed attitude in Soviet press articles toward our reform confirms this view.

"A meeting is planned between the leaders of our two countries. We should continue to work together to ensure that PRC-USSR relations are developed still further.

"I would like to put on record the hospitality displayed by the organizers of the sinologists' congress and the warm reception accorded us."

Official Interviewed on Beijing Exhibition

OW1512214588 Moscow International Service in Mandarin 0600 GMT 8 Dec 88

[From the "Current Events and Commentaries" program]

[Text] What does the carrier rocket that took the Soviet spacecraft "Buran" into the space look like? What do the Soviet-made tractors, combines, trucks, [words indistinct] look like? What about the automatic line developed by Soviet ophthamologist Petrorov for eye surgery, and what equipment is used to create the miracle? Answers to these and many other questions can be found at the Soviet Science and Technology Exhibition now being held in Beijing. I am quite sure, my dear friends, that some of you must have visited the exhibition. If you want to tell us what you think of the exhibition, please write us. Our address is: Chinese Editorial Department, Radio Moscow, USSR.

Now I want to report to you the impression obtained by Masolkov, director of the Beijing exhibition. He is speaking to Bolibov, a reporter of this station:

[Masolkov] Since it opened 9 days ago, the exhibition has received 120,000 visitors. Frankly speaking, the number of visitors to the exhibition is much higher than expected. We are honored that, on the 1st day after the exhibition opened, a Chinese Government delegation headed by Premier Li Peng visited the display and that the leaders of some ministries, noted scholars, and military officers have also visited our exhibition.

[Bolibov] Primarily what has attracted the attention of Chinese experts?

[Masolkov] The things that have attracted the attention of people of China's scientific-technological and industrial circles are exhibits sponsored by departments under the Soviet Academy of Sciences, namely (?building equipment), machinery, communications and transport equipment, agricultural equipment, medicine, cosmological and bioengineering research, and so forth. Yes, I should also point out that, during the period of the exhibition, specific proposals have been made to strengthen scientific and technological cooperation in the aforementioned areas. I think that this is one main success that the exhibition has achieved.

[Bolibov] As chairman of the exhibition, what areas of the exhibition do you think can be improved?

[Masolkov] I should honestly say that the departments and authorities displaying their equipment failed to anticipate the possibilities of the exhibition. What do I mean here? What I mean is that while the equipment on display is very good in terms of scientific and technological capabilities, and some equipment is unique in the world, the (?Chinese explanation of them is inadequate) as far as some equipment is concerned. One example is the high- precision metal-cutting machine tool.

[Bolibov] I think that this problem should be considered in the future. Now I would like to ask you this: What in Beijing has impressed you the most?

[Masolkov] I am most impressed by the fact that the exhibition is far more than merely a show of scientific and technological products. The exhibition has become a place where people can understand the Soviet lifestyle, the actual steps that our country has taken during the restructuring, and our country's rapid development. As a Soviet citizen, I am very glad to hear such comments from experts as well as ordinary visitors. Our Chinese comrades have been paying close attention to our country's economic and technological achievements, and they have highly evaluated our country's efforts in promoting peace.

Northeast Asia

PRAVDA Urges 'New Thinking' in Tokyo on Ties

PM1512143188 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
15 Dec 88 Second Edition p 5

[Vsevolod Ovchinnikov "Viewpoint": "Turning the Page"]

[Text] It seems to me it is time to open a new chapter in Soviet-Japanese relations. Indeed, it is no secret that their present state ill befits two world powers situated alongside one another. Particularly as during the years of restructuring the Soviet Union has made considerable progress in its relations with most states. Only with Japan do relations remain in an unenviable state, reminiscent of a smoldering force in the hearth, which does not flare up, but merely smokes.

For a long time Tokyo has been fond of pointing the finger at Washington. Japan, they say, is an ally of the United States. And until American-Soviet relations get going, you cannot expect an improvement in Japanese-Soviet relations either. But active political dialogue has broken out between the USSR and the United States and it has already produced concrete results. There have been qualitative advances in Soviet-Chinese relations too, and they are headed for complete normalization. The prerequisites have appeared for positive changes in the Asia-Pacific Ocean region as a whole. All this has thrown into even greater relief the unnatural stagnation of Japanese-Soviet relations and the possibility and necessity of putting them back on the road of normal development on the basis of balanced bilateral and regional interests.

But certain people in Tokyo think differently. They say that, having dynamized its foreign policy in all areas, the Soviet Union is not going to leave the Japanese sector as the only one unaffected. So one has to take a tougher line, and it will give in to the pressure... Those who advocate this view are trying to interpret restructuring as one-sided concessions by the Soviet Union. This is the position of the paper TOKYO SHIMBUN, for example. "In order to develop Japanese-Soviet relations," it claims, "Moscow must display new thinking in its approach to the problem of the 'northern territories'."

It is appropriate to ask: Where are the signs of "new thinking" in Tokyo's policy? Is it sensible to turn the notorious "territorial issue" into a stumbling block impeding the development of bilateral relations in all areas? After all, following the reestablishment of diplomatic relations our countries lived as good neighbors for nearly 25 years. It was not until the start of the eighties that Tokyo unilaterally restricted political contacts with Moscow and froze mutually advantageous deals in the trade and economic sphere, scientific and technical cooperation, and cultural exchanges. Complicity in U.S. "sanctions" against the USSR was accompanied by the kindling of anti-Soviet hysteria, an effort to instill in Japanese enmity toward and distrust of a neighboring people. But if official Tokyo circles are intent on making the normal development of bilateral relations contingent on the satisfaction of invalid Japanese territorial claims in the Soviet Union, then this approach is futile. Why do they show no signs of abandoning it?

According to Professor Takashi Inoguti of Tokyo University, the question of the "northern territories" is being used to justify increasing the military budget. Without references to the "Soviet threat" it would be difficult for the government to increase its military might, and the northern islands are a splendid pretext for this, Inoguti writes in the paper ASAHI.

Not only the progressive public, but also sober-minded conservative politicians are now beginning to realize that ultimatums are senseless. There is a growing awareness that disputes can only be resolved on the basis of mutually acceptable compromise. They cite a precedent in Japanese-Chinese relations, when the question of whom the Senkaku Islands belonged to was left to the discretion of future generations.

Recently there have been signs of a change for the better in Soviet-Japanese relations. Two years ago there was an exchange of visits by foreign ministers. During them a 5-year agreement was signed in Tokyo on trade and payments and an agreement was signed in Moscow on cultural links. E.A. Shevardnadze is soon to go to Japan on an official visit. It is to be hoped that it will be fruitful. As two close neighbors and as two major Asian powers, the USSR and Japan could actively collaborate not only on bilateral issues, but also in the area of security and cooperation in the Asian-Pacific Ocean region.

Moscow Japanese on Decision To Reduce Troops

OW1612045588 Moscow in Japanese to Japan 1000 GMT 9 Dec 88

[Dmitriyev commentary]

[Text] Radio Moscow commentator Dmitriyev comments on a new Soviet proposal made by Secretary General Gorbachev in his speech at the UN General Assembly as follows:

General Secretary Gorbachev, who is chairman of the Supreme Soviet Presidium and thus is the chief of state of the Soviet Union, speaking at the UN General Assembly, announced a decision to unilaterally cut Soviet forces by 500,000 men by 1991. He also said that the Soviet Union would cut 10,000 tanks, 8,500 pieces of artillery, and 800 Air Force planes in the USSR's European area and the territories of its allies in Europe.

Will this step by the Soviet Union contribute to making the world a safer place to live in?

The Soviet Union and its allies have declared that they will not resort to the use of armed force against any other country as long as they do not come under attack by armed forces themselves. We hope people will understand that the unilateral reduction of Soviet troops will not remain just words but will actually be carried out.

To trust in the genuine desire of the Soviet Union and its allies for peace will itself help contribute to alleviating military confrontations and even to strengthening stability and security, but that is not enough if we are pursuing a final guarantee for removal of threats of [word indistinct].

Such a guarantee is possible only when armaments of both confronting sides are reduced to a reasonable level at which the armaments are adequate for self-defense but are not adequate for offense. Speaking about the treaty for the abolition of intermediate range nuclear weapons in his speech at the United Nations, General Secretary Gorbachev declared that we are witnessing the historical fact that the principle based on the belief in having ample armaments is being replaced by one based on the concept of having sufficient armaments for defense.

The large-scale reductions of the Soviet troops announced by General Secretary Gorbachev are an act of supporting this historical change, and, in a broad sense, an act of supporting the concept of strengthening security by arms reduction instead of arms buildup. The purpose of the new Soviet proposal lies in this point.

The new Soviet proposal is also creating favorable environments in the future multinational efforts for the reduction of conventional arms. There is no doubt that the work of implementing the principle of maintaining armaments at a level not adequate for offense but adequate for defense will not be easy and will be a time consuming process for the nations concerned. Negotiations and adjustments of views will be necessary among countries concerned to determine what is adequate for their self-defense while being of no threat to other nations.

Objective assessment of interests and geographical features will have to be made. For instance, the Soviet Union has a very long border line, and thus has to maintain defense capabilities not only on western borders but also on eastern borders. Just as this is an important consideration for the Soviet Union, there are other conditions peculiar to other countries. It is brought to your attention that the Soviet Union, in deciding to unilaterally reduce its troops, took into account the interests of West European nations.

The Soviet Union made the decision to withdraw a total of six tank divisions from the GDR, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary by 1991 in agreement with the countries. The forces will thereafter be dissolved. In addition, from the Soviet forces stationed in these countries, amphibious ambush armored forces, including river crossing operations units and other forces, will be withdrawn. The divisions to remain in these countries will be reorganized to have an organization differing from that of the present day so that they will have a defensive nature. This is only natural since such a large number of tanks will have been pulled out.

General Secretary Gorbachev, in his speech at the United Nations, also said that the armed forces in the Asian area of the Soviet Union will be reduced on a large scale. A substantial portion of the Soviet forces stationed temporarily in Mongolia will be repatriated. I am not saying that simply because the arms reductions announced by the Soviet Union cover Asia, this has an important meaning for the nations of Asia and the Pacific. As you may all know, the military strategic concept of the United States is based on opening a second frontline in the Far East in the event of an emergency situation in Europe.

When we examine this U.S. strategic concept and the new Soviet proposal for arms reduction, we can draw the conclusion that the proposal can get rid of at least some factors which may further worsen the situation in Asia, although detente fostered by the proposal in Europe can not be automatically linked to detente in Asia. This Soviet proposal can not be said to be the best option, but is an expression of an objective mutual reliance in this modern world. Because of this mutual reliance, the Soviet proposal has aroused an active reaction in Japan, although the proposal gave priority to Europe. Generally speaking, official sources in Japan showed positive reaction to the proposal. However, Chief Cabinet Secretary Obuchi said that the Soviet military power was still huge and there was an imbalance with the Western side in the number of tanks. If he holds this view, he should consider the fact that the Western side has the edge in some weapons such as military aircraft. I would like to call his attention to the fact that the Soviet proposal for arms reduction was unilateral and did not attach any preconditions. Since the Soviet Union decided to unilaterally cut its 500,000 troops to facilitate the disarmament process, the West should consider how many troops it will reduce if it intends to reduce its troops based on reciprocity.

If the Western countries had positively complied with previous disarmament proposals from the Eastern side, it would have produced a speedy progress in disarmament and tangible results. For example, if Japan had seriously evaluated the Soviet proposals for strengthening peace in Asia made by General Secretary Gorbachev in his speeches in Vladivostok and Krasnoyarsk, how would the situation have developed? Japan appears ignorant of measures taken by the Soviet Union for the reduction of military power and military positiveness in Asia and the Pacific. In his UN speech, General Secretary Gorbachev stressed the need for serious dialogue with Japan. We expect Japan to take a more positive stance toward not only issues related to itself, but other issues related to international security.

Biryukova Meets With Mongolian Deputy Premier
OW1512020188 Ulaanbaatar International Service in English 0910 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Politburo member of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee and Deputy Prime Minister Altangerel, who is on a visit to the Soviet Union, has met in Moscow with alternate Politburo member of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee and Deputy Prime Minister Biryukova, who is head of the Social Bureau of the Soviet Council of Ministers, and exchanged views on social policy.

PRAVDA Cites Mongolian Paper on Stalinism
PM1512135588 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 15 Dec 88 First Edition p 5

[Correspondent V. Sapov report: "Restoring the Truth"]

[Text] Ulaanbaatar, 14 Dec—"Mongolia and Stalin" is the subject of a recent item in UNEN in light of the discussion of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee Politburo proposals for the forthcoming party plenum.

In particular it is proposed to take down the bronze monument of "the leader of all the peoples" which to this day stands in front of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences and all other statues and bas-reliefs depicting him and the Ch. Choybalsan personality cult is also being debunked.

Welcoming the process of the purging of Stalinism taking place in the USSR, the country's public expresses solidarity with the MPR's course toward reviewing previous assessments of past events. After all, in the stagnation period, which also took place in the Mongolian People's Republic, fear of being misunderstood by Soviet people prevailed over the search for the truth. Yet, UNEN writes, the restoration of the truth has nothing in common with reviewing our position with respect to the country of Lenin.

The friendship of the Mongolian and Soviet peoples, the newspaper notes, is based on Lenin's ideas for building the people's state and for all-around cooperation between our countries.

Southeast Asia & Pacific

Shevardnadze Receives Vietnamese Ambassador
LD1512191288 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1630 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Today Comrade Shevardnadze received Nguyen Manh Cam, member of the SRV Communist Party Central Committee and Vietnamese ambassador to the USSR, at the latter's request. An exchange of opinions took place on certain problems concerning the Asia-Pacific region and on questions of bilateral relations. Comrade Shevardnadze expressed sincere gratitude to the SRV Communist Party Central Committee, the government, and the entire Vietnamese people for the condolences and sympathy expressed in connection with the destructive earthquake in the Armenian SSR and for the decision adopted to render assistance to the victims.

SRV Troop Withdrawal From Cambodia Viewed
OW1512234988 Moscow International Service in Mandarin 1400 GMT 13 Dec 88

[Fedorov commentary]

[Text] As Cambodia enters the dry season, the weather is arid but not as hot as before. The dust kicked up by trucks slowly disappears on the dry road. In the next few days, there will be more dust on the road. According to an announcement by the Cambodian Defense Ministry, between 15 and 20 December Vietnam will withdraw 18,000 troops in 6 divisions from Cambodia. Our station commentator Fedorov has the following to say on this:

The 18,000 troops will be the last batch of the 50,000 Vietnamese troops who, it was announced last May, will be withdrawn before the end of this year. After the completion of this troop withdrawal, only 50,000 Vietnamese soldiers will be left stationed in Cambodia—that is, half of the number of Vietnamese troops that were stationed in Cambodia on 1 June. Thus, both Hanoi and Phnom Penh have obviously and steadfastly fulfilled the obligations that they have undertaken.

As usual, representatives of international organizations and foreign reporters will be invited to witness, as observers, the Vietnamese troop withdrawal from Cambodia. I think it is good for foreign observers to witness the Vietnamese troop withdrawal, for many Western propaganda machines and the mass media in the ASEAN countries have been doubting the reality of the Vietnamese troop withdrawal. For example, the BANGKOK POST said that although Western diplomats in the Thai capital welcomed Vietnam's proposed plan on the troop withdrawal from Cambodia, they have doubts about the withdrawal.

From an objective viewpoint, fewer people are now in doubt. In accordance with an agreement reached with the Cambodian Government, Vietnam began to withdraw its troops from Cambodia in (?1988). It should be pointed out that although Vietnam's partial troop withdrawal is viewed in the West as a means to camouflage Vietnam's policies, those who are reluctant to give up their view cannot but now admit that the number of Vietnamese troops stationed in Cambodia has decreased.

By the first quarter of 1990, Vietnam will withdraw all its troops from Cambodia; and that date is not far off. That will be the final deadline for Vietnam to withdraw its troops. I would then like to see the reaction of those who until today have refused to recognize the obvious fact of the Vietnamese troop withdrawal. The withdrawal of Vietnamese troops on schedule shows that Vietnam has fulfilled without fail the obligations that it has undertaken.

Prospects for Solution Examined

BK1612054988 Moscow in Cambodian to Cambodia 1230 GMT 15 December 88

[Station commentary by (Stanislav Kalerkin)]

[Text] Today, Vietnam continues to withdraw its volunteer troop detachment from Cambodia. From 15 to 21 December, 18,000 Vietnamese troops from 6 divisional units will be repatriated. Our commentator, Comrade (Stanislav Kalerkin), has the following comments:

The Vietnamese troops have been successively withdrawn from Cambodia since 1982. However, the withdrawal of this Vietnamese troop contingent has special significance:

First, it is the largest withdrawal. In less than a week, the Vietnamese Army volunteers who are in Cambodia to protect the country's people from the reemergence of the danger posed by the genocidal Pol Pot regime will be reduced to 50,000. This means that the total number of troops will be cut in half.

Second, the situation of the remaining Vietnamese troops has undergone a significant change. They have been put under the command of the PRK National Defense Ministry. Moreover, the Vietnamese volunteer troops have been withdrawn 30 km from the Cambodian-Thai border.

The reduction of Vietnamese troops has been carried out along with the transfer back to the country of Vietnamese counselors who were working within Cambodia's civil institutions. As declared in Comrade Heng Samrin's recent announcement, all the Vietnamese civil counselors will be repatriated by the end of the year. Undoubtedly, the withdrawal of the Vietnamese volunteer troops in such great numbers constitutes a favorable condition for promoting the process of a political settlement of the Cambodia problem.

It is worth noting that during the past few months, moderately active moves have been seen in the search for ways to provide a political solution to the Cambodian conflict. For instance, the informal meeting that took place in Bogor, Indonesia between the representatives of the Cambodian leadership and those of the CGDK [Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea] with the participation of Vietnam, Laos, and the ASEAN states. Furthermore, at the working group's meeting held in Jakarta, Indonesia, the delegates from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia put forward a joint draft proposal for a solution to the international aspects of the Cambodian problem. The document has primarily envisaged the Cambodian people's fundamental rights.

In addition to linking the withdrawal of the Vietnamese Army volunteers with the cessation of military aid to the opposing factions in Cambodia, the draft has proposed the establishment of Southeast Asia as a zone of peace and the convening of an international conference to guarantee peace in Cambodia.

Now, the frequency of direct meetings between Comrade Hun Sen, leader of the Cambodian Government, and Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, the former Cambodian leader, is noted. The meetings have provided the contingency to the parties to reach an agreement on a number of questions.

Our commentator, Comrade (Stanislav Kalerkin), concluded by saying: In my opinion, if all the parties know how to maintain a constructive stance on a solution to the Cambodian problem, it is certain that they will be able to open up prospects toward normalizing the situation in the whole Asia-Pacific region.

Pullout Aids PRC-SRV Talks

OW1612015688 Moscow International Service in Mandarin 0600 GMT 10 Dec 88

[Nikolayev commentary]

[Text] The Cambodian Defense Ministry has issued a communique declaring that from 15 to 21 December 1988, Vietnam's six divisions, totaling 18,000 personnel, will withdraw from Cambodia. In this connection, our station commentator Nikolayev writes the following:

According to the Cambodian-Vietnamese agreement, these are the last units of the 50,000 Vietnamese troops who are to be pulled out by the end of this year. The pullout began last June. Some 32,000 Vietnamese volunteers have already returned to their fatherland. Therefore, after 21 December only half of the Vietnamese troops will remain in Cambodia. It should also be pointed out that Vietnam has put these troops under the command of the Cambodian People's Revolutionary Army Headquarters.

The pullout of large numbers of Vietnamese troops has clarified many questions:

First, it shows Vietnamese and Cambodian leaders are sincerely and seriously implementing the resolution that all Vietnamese troops be pulled out before 1990.

Second, it shows the genuine hope of both Vietnam and Cambodia for peace and their constructive attitude on the political mediation of the Cambodian situation.

Finally, the reduction of the Vietnamese troops in Cambodia and the curtailment of the Vietnamese employees in the Cambodian administrative departments demonstrate the increasing consolidation of the Cambodian Government's position in internal, military, and economic affairs. It shows Vietnam's respect for People's Kampuchea's sovereignty and independence. In addition, the withdrawal of half of the Vietnamese troops from Cambodia will create a fine condition for the development of dialogue between Cambodia and all other parties.

This conforms to the hope of all people who wish to resolve the Cambodian issue as soon as possible.

It should be pointed out that in the past few months, the world has seen specific activities of trying to resolve this question of regional conflicts. I would like to particularly point out the significance of the meeting in Bogor attended by representatives of all parties of Cambodia, the three Indochinese countries, and the ASEAN countries. The meeting laid the foundations for a political solution to the issue. The foundations are Vietnam's withdrawal of troops from Cambodia and the guarantee for guarding against the restoration of the regime of the Pol Pot clique.

As we all know, in his talks in Moscow not long ago, Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen discussed sweeping questions concerning the mediation of the Cambodian situation. Both sides held that corresponding conditions were created to eliminate the conflicting situation. Both the Soviet Union and China reiterated the intention to eliminate the external cause of the Cambodian issue, and said that Cambodia's internal situation should be resolved by all Cambodian parties. At a meeting with Gorbachev, the Chinese foreign minister pointed out: The mediation of the Cambodian situation is in the interests of the peoples of China, the Soviet Union, Vietnam, and Cambodia, and it can help consolidate peace and stability in this region. The Soviet leader agreed with this point of view and emphatically pointed out: The dialogue between China and Vietnam can play an important role in this regard. Formerly, China stated that if Vietnam withdraws part of its troops, China would hold talks with Vietnam. I think that the withdrawal of half of the Vietnamese volunteers, which will be completed in the near future, will create a practical condition for China's talks with Vietenam.

Near East & South Asia

Shevardnadze on Mideast Conference, U.S. Talks

PM1612124188 London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 16 Dec 88 p 37

[Report on interview with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze by Raghidah Dirgham in New York; date not given]

[Text] In a brief interview with AL-HAWADITH, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadnadze denied the Israel radio claim, cited by agencies, that he suggested to the Israeli side that it should submit proposals as an alternative to an international conference. He said: "This is not at all true. What we were talking about was the question of a preparatory committee for the international conference." Explaining the difference, Shevardnadze said: "We told them: If you are unhappy about the idea of a preparatory committee for an international conference, then tell us what you want and what you propose as an alternative to the preparatory committee, not as an alternative to an international conference."

He added: "We have long been calling for the formation of a preparatory committee to pave the way for an international conference with the participation of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. France has made a similar suggestion. Its name is not important—whether it is called a preparatory committee or a preparatory conference, or anything else. What matters is that preparatory work should begin, regardless of whether we label this as talks or as a preparatory group. What is important is that an international conference should be held, and that work should begin for fulfilling this objective."

AL-HAWADITH asked if the U.S.-Soviet talks covered in depth the possible consequences of the PNC [Palestinian National Council] resolutions concerning PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's announcement of his acceptance of the State of Israel. Shevardnadze replied: "The talks did not cover a detailed discussion of that issue." He was referring to the talks held between President Gorbachev, President Ronald Reagan, and President-elect George Bush on Governor's Island.

Asked if the talks between the two foreign ministers touched on the details, Shevardnadze said that "the meeting was brief, and we did not discuss details. However, we did tell them that new encouraging signs have emerged recently, and they said that they agreed." He added that the New York meetings were not "negotiating sessions." "We did not come expecting reactions to our proposals on various issues, and we did not expect reactions different from what we had already heard," he said.

Petrovskiy on U.S.-PLO Dialogue, Conference

LD1512170888 Moscow TASS in English 1700 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Geneva December 15 TASS—Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Petrovskiy described as "a reasonable action going in the right direction" the statement issued by the U.S. State Department on its readiness to open a dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organisation. Vladimir Petrovskiy was speaking at a news conference at Geneva's Palace of Nations today.

This, he continued, opens up a possibility for promoting an international dialogue with the participation of all parties concerned, including the PLO, and creating favourable prerequisites to prepare and to convene the international peace conference.

However, the Soviet deputy foreign minister stressed, in the present circumstances, when there appeared a positive trend toward a political settlement of regional conflicts with the assistance of the Soviet Union and the United States on a number of occasions, it is not enough today to maintain just dialogue for the sake of dialogue. What is required is systematic, concentrated efforts that would ensure a genuine breakthrough towards a comprehensive and just solution of the Middle East problem.

The Soviet Union stands for an immediate start of preparatory work within the Security Council aiming at convening the international conference.

The main feature of the modern political process in the world, Vladimir Petrovskiy stressed, is the renewal of bilateral and multilateral relations, the acquisition by the United Nations of its original role of coordinating the actions of states.

Having reminded about the broad philosophy of secure, non-violent world, backed up by the programme of concrete actions made by Mikhail Gorbachev at the United Nations, he said the initial premise of our philosophy was recognition of a qualitatively new state of the world and, consequently, of new ways, as compared with the past, to ensure it. The Soviet Union expresses firm conviction that the United Nations in these conditions can and must play a key role in promoting a more durable and just peace for all.

The Soviet Union is interested, in particular, in the United Nations exerting every effort to heal such a bleeding wound as Afghanistan. In this connection the Soviet Union proposed to consider creating a U.N. peace-keeping force in Kabul and other strategic centers of the country until a broad-based government was established. A special international conference, which could be convened with effective support from the U.N. secretary-general, would promote neutrality and demilitarization of Afghanistan. The revival of Afghanistan would also benefit from the creation of a volunteer international peace corps under the auspices of the United Nations.

Speaking about the discussion of the Palestinian issue at the U.N. General Assembly, the Soviet deputy foreign minister stressed that the establishment of a lasting and just peace in the Middle East, with which national interests of both Arab and Israeli peoples are linked, requires a new political approach.

Today when there is the green light for the immediate convocation of an international conference on the Middle East and for the settlement of the conflict in this region, the Soviet Union makes a fresh call on all interested states to step up efforts to accelerate this process. The United Nations, the Security Council and its permanent members can and must play an important role in this. We see our common task in not missing the nascent chance and in starting practical work for the purpose of establishing lasting peace in the Middle East.

CNN Cited on Talks With PLO

LD1512012288 Moscow TASS in English 0007 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Washington December 15 TASS—The United States has decided to establish a dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organization, the U.S. CNN television network reported with a reference to sources in the U.S. Department of State. According to its information negotiations will be started in Tunisia, and the U.S. ambassador to that country will represent Washington.

CNN notes that this decision means a remarkable change of the U.S. stance. It came after Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, delivered a speech at the session of the U.N. General Assembly in Geneva. There was no official announcement about this decision yet. At meetings with the press on december 14, official representatives of the Department of State and the White Houses asserted that the U.S. stand would remain firm and that it had not been altered as a result of 'Arafat's speech

An official spokeswoman of the press department of the U.S. Department of State refused to confirm or disprove the report that the United States had decided to establish direct negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organization. However, she told a TASS correspondent that U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz would hold a news conference on the question of the PLO.

New U.S. PLO Policy 'Turn Toward Realism'

PM1512171188 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 16 Dec 88 First Edition p 7

[Own correspondent Vitaliy Gan "Correspondent's Commentary," followed by Yuriy Glukhov "Viewpoint" article]

[Text]

Washington's Decision

Washington—At an urgently convened news conference, U.S. Secretary of State G. Shultz has announced Washington's decision to start a "substantive dialogue" with the PLO. The U.S. ambassador to Tunisia will be the "authorized channel" for this dialogue.

Washington's step created a real sensation here. An official ban on all contacts with PLO representatives, imposed under pressure from Israel and its U.S. lobbyists, has been in effect since 1975.

So, what has happened? According to reports by journalists with access to the corridors of power, Shultz and his advisers spent a whole day analyzing Y. 'Arafat's latest statements, and this supposedly resulted in the changed U.S. stand.

It is assumed that by starting a dialogue with the Palestinians, the United States could create prerequisites for a constructive quest for peace in an exceptionally explosive region—if for no other reason, at least because ignoring the Palestinian problem, which is crucial to any future settlement, can only maintain tension in the Near East, which has been torn apart by five wars. It must be said that the U.S. press also admits and confirms the USSR's important role in the process of a Near East settlement.

At the same time, fears are expressed that the U.S. "strategic ally and friend," Israel, will probably try to apply maximum efforts to frustrate the establishment of U.S.-PLO contacts. Everyone knows about the influence of the U.S. Zionist lobby and the pro-Israel leaning in U.S. policy that was de facto confirmed by Reagan and Shultz, who emphasized in their statements their "unwavering commitment to the security and prosperity" of Tel Aviv and the impossibility of "driving a wedge" into relations between the two countries. [Gan ends]

A Turn Toward Realism

[Glukhov begins] What has taken place should, according to the logic of things, have happened at the very moment when the PLO was created: The U.S. President has given instructions to establish direct, official contacts with that organization. Essentially, this is a matter of recognition of the PLO. Let me note that this represents a 180-degree turn in the U.S. stand, but it is a turn toward common sense, toward recognition of the realities of the Near East situation.

Let us look at the reality that has been so long and so stubbornly ignored by U.S. diplomacy. The Palestinians' uprising in the territories occupied by Israel has now lasted more than 1 year. It has demonstrated the Palestinian people's determination to struggle to the finish for the restoration of their trampled rights, primarily the right to self-determination and to create their own state. This right is recognized by the international community and confirmed by UN documents. Finally, a step toward its implementation was taken by the Palestinian National Council (parliament in exile) when it proclaimed the creation of a Palestinian state. This state has already been recognized [eto gosudarstvo priznano] by dozens of states in the world today.

The PLO's leading role in upholding the Palestinians' rights is beyond dispute. It has won international recognition as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The peaceful and nonviolent nature of the Palestinians' uprising, the PLO's commitment to the quest for a political settlement and the convening of an international conference on the Near East, its support for UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and the condemnation of all forms of terrorism have helped to further boost the PLO's standing and the world community's sympathy for the Palestinian cause.

In these circumstances, the position taken by the United States and Israel looked especially offensive. The current UN General Assembly session demonstrated the isolation in which the two partners found themselves. I believe that Washington was shocked when the international community moved its sittings to Geneva in response to the U.S. refusal to issue an entry visa to Y. 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, to take part in the session's work. This is why I do not rule out the possibility that a considerable role in changing the U.S. stance was played by factors like the desire to escape from isolation, to save face in the Arab world, to sound out the Palestinians' firmness in upholding their national aspirations by political means, and to try to take advantage of intra-Palestinian and inter-Arab contradictions.

This is why UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar was quite justified in his assessment: "There is no need to be superoptimists. This is only a beginning." Yes, so far there has been movement without any positive advance in the U.S. stance. Moreover, even this step by Washington has provoked a stormy negative reaction and obstruction from Israel. Nevertheless, there has been a turn toward realism. One can gradually discern the outlines of prospects for a settlement and a clearing of the obstables in the way of peace in the Near East.

UN General Assembly Discusses Palestinian Issue

LD1312161688 Moscow TASS in English 1556 GMT 13 Dec 88

[Text] Geneva December 13 TASS—The United Nations General Assembly opened a three-day session at the Geneva Palace of Nations today to discuss the Palestinian problem. The highest forum of the world body convenes for the first time in Geneva following the U.S. Government's refusal to issue an entry visa to PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat who was to address the 43rd session of the General Assembly.

In the eyes of the practically entire world community the position of the outgoing U.S. Administration looks even more defying and at variance with the political realities in the Middle East following the recent decisions in Algiers by the Palestine National Council which paved the way towards bringing peace to this much-suffering region. Representatives of the states members of the United Nations, hundreds of journalists who flocked here from around the world are looking forward to Yasir 'Arafat's speech at the General Assembly later today. The Palestinian delegation express the hope that the session and speeches by the PLO leader will help set off a serious process of the political settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian issue which lies at the core of the problem. Unfortunately, the statement by Israel's permanent representative to the United Nations in Geneva Pinas Eliav, permeated with conventional propaganda attacks on the PLO, bears no evidence to any shifts in Tel Aviv's political thinking.

U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar arrived here today to attend the three-day session of the U.N. General Assembly on the Palestinian problem.

'Arafat's 15 Dec Arrival in GDR Noted

LD1512074288 Moscow TASS in English 0615 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] The GDR news agency ADN reports:

Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Executive Chairman Yasir 'Arafat arrived in Berlin in the early hours of Thursday [15 December] for a working visit.

'Arafat, who flew in from Geneva, is due to meet GDR party and state leader Erich Honecker later in the day.

In Geneva, 'Arafat had submitted to the U.N. General Assembly's Palestine debate a Palestinian peace initiative directed at a political solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The initiative was widely welcomed and supported by U.N. member countries.

GDR Deputy Foreign Minister Heinz-Dieter Winter told the debate the initiative was based on international law and aimed at peace for all states and peples.

The GDR considered an international Middle-East peace conference under U.N. auspices the best way to settle the Middle-East peace conference in a comprehensive, just and lasting manner, Winter said.

Walters Urges USSR, PRC To Recognize Israel

LD1412232788 Moscow TASS in English 2311 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Geneva December 15 TASS—"Israel must face up to the need for withdrawal from occupied territories and to the need to accommodate legitimate Palestinian political rights", Vernon Walters, U.S. permanent representative to the United Nations, said on Wednesday [14 December] at a meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the Palestine question in Geneva. He said that in order to achieve the exercise of legitimate political rights Palestinians require, they should "accomodate the reality of Israel's existence" and "commit themselves to negotiations with Israel".

Vernon Walters repeated the U.S. Administration's known stand on the Middle East settlement. Then he emphasised that "it is time for the Soviet Union to restore full diplomatic relations with Israel. It is time for the People's Republic of China to recognise Israel".

Calling on the international community to channel the energy in a realistic direction, the U.S. permanent representative to the United Nations emphasised: "We must tell the parties that their dispute is resolvable".

Bhutto Asked To Help in Returning POW's

LD1612121088 Moscow TASS in English 1104 GMT 16 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 16 TASS—The Soviet charity and health foundation has sent a letter to Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan.

The letter written on behalf of the relatives of Soviet prisoners of war held in Pakistan asks the prime minister to help release the Soviet soldiers.

Afghan Premier Sharq Cited on Peace Settlement
PM1612093588 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
15 Dec 88 First Edition p 4

[TASS report: "The Only Way"]

[Text] Kabul, 14 Dec—A session of the Council of Ministers has been held in the Afghan capital in which those taking part warmly supported the proposals of M.S. Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, for a political settlement of the situation surrounding Afghanistan, put forward at the 43d session of the UN General Assembly. Afghan Prime Minister M.H. Sharq, who spoke at the session, noted that a peace settlement is the only way of establishing peace and security in Afghanistan. Touching on the recent talks between Yu.M. Vorontsov, USSR first deputy foreign minister and USSR ambassador to the Republic of Afghanistan, and representatives of the opposition, he stated that they were one more important step on the path of ending the bloody war in Afghanistan.

In Nangarhar Province hostilities are continuing between Afghan Army subunits and formations of rebels. The BAKHTAR agency has reported that last Monday government troops defeated an armed opposition grouping in the province, killing 65 extremists and wounding 53.

Prisoner in Iran Cited on Pro-Khomeyni Activity
LD1512185588 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian
1400 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] A briefing was held at the Afghan Foreign Ministry press center at which Iranian citizen Jamshid Nura met with journalists. He was recently arrested for espionage activity. Our correspondent Aleksandr Shkirando reports from Kabul:

[Shkirando] Now, when the proposals for a peaceful settlement of the Afghan issue put forward by Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev at the 43d UN General Assembly session are being discussed with interest and are meeting with broad support throughout Afghanistan, the blatant interference from abroad into that country's internal affairs continues. This became even more obvious after the testimony given by Iranian citizen Jamshid Nura. He did not deny at the news conference that he was a professional spy. Jamshid Nura said the following:

[Begin Nura recording in Persian with superimposed Russian translation] In 1986, in Tehran, I was recruited by an espionage committee called [name indistinct]. Soon that committee was set up within the framework of the whole country; it had 5,000 members. The main goal of the committee is to spread its influence throughout the entire Middle East, and first and foremost, in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan. The country's leadership, Jamshid Nura continued, maintains very close links with that committee, too. On the whole, its activity was carried out according to Khomeyni's plan. Thus, in accordance with it, three large armed formations were set up on Iranian territory. One of them was aimed at Afghanistan. Those Afghans who refused to join it were either killed or imprisoned. The gangs formed of such Afghans were under our full control. We supplied them with arms received from the United States, although we replaced the Made in the U.S.A. labels with Made in Iran.

Jamshid Nura then said that he personally, with a small detachment of no more than 50 people, had illegally penetrated Zaranj, the administrative centre of Nimruz Province, five times. Through Afghan agents he gathered information about the activity of Soviet military advisers and servicemen, and the location of military airfields and other objectives. Spreading rumors about the defeat of Soviet troops in Afghanistan was also Jamshid Nura's task. An important duty of the Iranian espionage center was killing well-known Afghan figures. In a word, Jamshid Nura concluded, we tried to fulfill Khomeyni's plan by the time that the Soviet troops would be withdrawn, that is, to gain control over Afghanistan. [end recording]

Nishanov, Delegation Hold Talks in Damascus
PM1512125988 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
15 Dec 88 Morning Edition p 4

[TASS report: "In the Land of Syria"]

[Text] Damascus, 14 Dec—Talks have been held in the Syrian capital between a USSR parliamentary group delegation headed by R.N. Nishanov, member of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium and first secretary of the Uzbek Communist Party Central Committee, and a delegation of the Arab Interparliamentary Union led by A. Bouraoui, general secretary of this organization. The Soviet parliamentarians are visiting Syria at the invitation of the Arab Interparliamentary Union.

In an atmosphere of friendship and mutual understanding, they discussed a broad range of topical issues concerning the situation in the Near East and the world as a whole and ways to further deepen Soviet-Syrian collaboration in international affairs.

A high appraisal was given of the Soviet initiatives proposed by M.S. Gorbachev, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium and general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, when addressing the United Nations. The coincidence of views on the issues touched on in this speech was noted.

The sides positively assessed the development of the international situation and indicated the large role played in this process by parliaments and parliamentarians.

The participants in the meeting noted the importance of the decisions adopted by the extraordinary Palestine National Council (PNC) session in Algiers for making progress toward peace in the region, and they spoke in favor of the need to increase efforts and practical steps to convene an international conference on the Near East.

During the meeting the sides expressed their mutual satisfaction with the state of friendly relations between the two countries and their desire to strengthen multifaceted Soviet-Syrian cooperation.

As part of the visit the members of the Soviet delegation met yesterday with 'A.Q. Qaddurah, speaker of the Syrian People's Council (parliament). During the conversation, which proceeded in a friendly atmosphere, they discussed a range of issues connected with the present-day international situation, the state of Soviet-Syrian cooperation, and the further development of ties between the two countries' parliaments. They noted with satisfaction that there have been improvements in the international political atmosphere. In this context the sides spoke in favor of the need to further increase efforts to create a system of universal security and peace. The speaker of the Syrian parliament particularly stressed the enormous importance in this connection of the complex of proposals proposed by M.S. Gorbachev from the UN rostrum for radically improving the international situation.

During the discussion of regional problems special attention was devoted to the Near East. The participants in the conversation confirmed the need for urgent measures designed to unblock the process of settling the Arab-Israeli conflict and convene an international conference on the Near East. The head of the Soviet delegation noted the important significance of unity of action by Arab states and the large role played by Syria in the search for solutions leading to peace in the region.

The sides exchanged opinions on the question of further developing coordinated efforts by the two countries' parliamentarians in resolving topical regional problems and problems common to all mankind. The sides confirmed that good relations of a confiding nature have formed between the two countries.

R.N. Nishanov highly appraised the stand taken by Syria on the Afghan settlement. 'A.Q. Qaddurah confirmed that his country will continue to work for a just, peaceful solution to the Afghan problem.

On behalf of all Syrians and also on his own behalf, the speaker of the Syrian People's Council expressed deep condolences to the Soviet delegation on those who died as a result of the natural disaster in Soviet Armenia. He said that the Syrian leadership has decided to send six transport aircraft with medicine, food, and clothing to the earthquake region. The Soviet side expressed sincere gratitude for the sympathy shown.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Background to Brazzaville Protocol Noted

PM1512163588 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 15 Dec 88 Second Edition p 5

["Supplying Details" report for PRAVDA by APN correspondents D. Amvrosiyev and N. Venediktov: "Talks Succeed. Protocol on South-West Africa Signed in Congo Capital"]

[Text] Brazzaville, 14 Dec—It took just 2 hours on 13 December to draw up the so-called "Brazzaville protocol." It was signed by delegations from Angola, Cuba, and South Africa, with the United States as intermediary. It is the first concrete step in the settlement of the situation in southwest Africa. But taking it was not easy.

It is 8 months since the participants in the process started the long and difficult marathon, meeting in London, Brazzaville, Cairo, New York, and Geneva to find mutually acceptable ways of bringing about Namibian independence, safeguarding Angolan security, and creating conditions for the withdrawal of the Cuban internationalists from Angola.

There were many obstacles on the path to this target, particularly during the final stage of the talks. Only a month ago in Geneva it appeared that solutions had been found which would be implemented in concrete documents. But they were all but wrecked as a result of a change in South Africa's position during the previous round of talks in Brazzaville. In particular, it put forward demands contradicting accords that had been reached. For instance, the South African side demanded to have its own observers in the commission monitoring the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola and, without anyone's consent, it took French leave from Brazzaville. But common sense prevailed in the end.

In the end, the sides agreed to recommend to the UN secretary general the commencement, as of 1 April 1989, of the implemenation of UN Security Council Resolution 435 on the decolonization of Namibia.

Moreover, an accord was reached on a meeting on 22 December 1988 in New York. It is envisaged that a tripartite accord (on the granting of independence to Namibia, the withdrawal of South African troops from its territory, and the monitoring of this by the United Nations) and a bilateral Angolan-Cuban agreement on the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola will be signed at the meeting.

But some technical matters remain unresolved. For example, Angola and Cuba have appealed to the international community for $800 million to be allocated to them to ensure the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. A number of formulae have to be clarified, too.

In accordance with the protocol, all these matters will be resolved by a joint commission which will start work the moment the tripartite agreement is signed. The countries that signed the "Brazzaville protocol" and expressed a high opinion of the role of the Soviet Union and United States in its preparation saw fit to suggest to the two great powers that they participate in the commission's work as observers. As USSR Deputy Foreign Minister A. Adamishin told us in an interview, "the Soviet Union is prepared to do this." He stressed that Soviet foreign policy is geared to a peaceful settlement of regional conflicts, and that this was an appreciable contribution to the achievement of accords on South-West Africa.

RSA Meeting With ANC in FRG Described

PM1512124988 Moscow MOSKOVSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 6 Dec 88 p 4

[Interview with Doctor of Historical Sciences I.I. Filatova by S. Kukhianidze under the rubric "Our Interviews": "The Leverkusen 'Triangle'"; date, place not given—first three paragraphs are MOSKOVSKAYA PRAVDA introduction]

[Excerpts] Recently a meeting took place in the small West German city of Leverkusen which attracted the attention of the world press and evoked lively, and sometimes contradictory, comment.

This interest was not fortuitous. Even a year or two ago it would have been difficult to imagine the three participants in the meeting at a discussion table. They were members of the leadership of the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC); the Soviet public, represented by a delegation of the Soviet Committee for Solidarity with Asian and African Countries; and representatives of the white community in the RSA, largely Afrikaner scientists. [passage omitted]

What course did this quite unusual meeting take, and what questions did its participants discuss? We have asked Doctor of Historical Sciences Irina Ivanovna Filatova, lecturer at the Moscow State University Institute of Asian and African Countries, who attended the meeting as a member of the Soviet delegation, to tell us about this.

[Filatova] First of all, a few words about the initiator of the meeting. Although IDASA [Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa] is a legal organization, it is hard for its members to operate in conditions of repression and censorship. After all, the aims of the institute are seditious from the viewpoint of the regime—a quest for an alternative to apartheid and for ways of turning South Africa into a democratic state. [passage omitted]

The IDASA leaders themselves defined the range of questions to which they wished to obtain answers from us—at first hand, so to speak. Glasnost and restructuring in the USSR, experience in resolving interethnic problems, Soviet foreign policy in general and in southern Africa in particular....

We answered without hiding the difficulties that are confronting us today. It was pleasing to see that our South African interlocutors were quite well informed about events in the USSR and had read M.S. Gorbachev's book "Restructuring and the New Thinking for Our Country and the Whole World." Incidentally, it is not banned in the RSA. However, reading the book is one thing, and hearing an live account which can contribute to a more sober view, is another [No odno delo prochitat knigu, drugoye—uslyshat zhivoy rasskaz kotoryy mozhet sposobstvovat boleye trezvomu vzglyadu.] They literally asked us about everything. About the essence of the reforms that are being carried out in our country, about the potential of glasnost, about whether democratization in our country is continuing.... The problems in our current interethnic relations attracted special interest. South African society is a multiracial and multinational society. Therefore, the Soviet experience in its various manifestations is of great interest to that country, in the view of our interlocutors. [passage omitted]

[Kukhianidze] You have not said anything so far about the USSR's policy toward the RSA. Does the meeting in Leverkusen not indicate a change in this policy? As far as I know, changes in the Soviet stand in this respect are currently being widely discussed in the West....

[Filatova] We were asked many questions in Leverkusen on this issue. It is true that there have been quite a few articles in the Western press claiming that the Soviet Union is moving away from support for the ANC and in general is all but on the point of establishing diplomatic relations with Pretoria.

Proof of this is sought in individual statements by Soviet scientists whose words, moreover, are frequently cited out of context or even distorted altogether. That is on the one hand. On the other hand, Western journalists cannot get used to the fact that the utterances of Soviet scientists may not reflect the official viewpoint of the government. In the spirit of the old times they reason as follows: This utterance obviously reflects the stance of the Soviet leadership to a greater extent than that because it came from a person with a higher rank, and so on and so forth....

Our country's basic position toward the apartheid regime remains unchanged. I do not know of a single document or fact which indicates that some sort of metamorphosis is under way on this question.

As for the dialogue in Leverkusen, we and the ANC leaders met with representatives of the white intelligentsia there, whose attitude toward the apartheid regime is critical. We regard the expansion of contacts with forces which oppose apartheid as extremely important. Our meeting has shown that such contacts are not just interesting, for they help us to better understand each other and to rid ourselves of stereotypes. And that is very important in the quest for political solutions.

All the meeting's participants took the view that the dialogue must be continued, although no specific decision was reached on this occasion. We hope that it will be continued.

East Europe

Hungarian Official Says Pullout 'Right Decision'

PM1512150988 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 15 Dec 88 p 3

[Interview with Colonel Geza Sipos, deputy chief of the Hungarian People's Army Main Political Directorate, by own correspondent A. Kaverznev: "Trust Will Save Peace"; date not given—first paragraph is editorial introduction]

[Text] Budapest—A. Kaverznev, our correspondent in Budapest, met with Colonel Geza Sipos, chief of the Agitation and Propaganda Directorate and deputy chief of the Main Political Directorate of the Hungarian People's Army.

[Kaverznev] Tell me, Comrade Colonel, did the Soviet leadership's decision to withdraw six tank divisions plus some airborne and ground attack units from GDR, Czechoslovakian, and Hungarian territory take you by surprise?

[Sipos] The decision itself was no surprise to us because we had already been given separate advance notice. Not about the actual content of the statement or the number of troops to be withdrawn, but about the basic thrust of the statement.

The personnel demonstrated equally great interest not only in those sections of Comrade Gorbachev's speech which dealt with disarmament problems but also the comments on general political and economic questions. The tasks to be given to the Hungarian People's Army in connection with the withdrawal of the Soviet military units from Hungary will have to be determined, and it will also be necessary to decide what we have to do to maintain our country's security at the proper level. Of course, we shall have to assume certain duties which the Soviet troops used to perform.

It is very important to emphasize that we heard no extreme views on the troop withdrawal—neither excessive delight nor gloomy pessimism—during the discussions. On the one hand, we regard the withdrawal of 25 percent of the Soviet troops as part of the single process of reducing international tension. On the other, it is good that our country is among the first that the Soviet military units will be leaving, although we know very well that this will be quite a lengthy process.

[Kaverznev] In your opinion, what effect could the declared reduction in the number of armed forces have on the military equilibrium in Europe? Specifically, will Hungary's security not be diminished?

[Sipos] Because the question is addressed to me personally, I will give you my personal opinion. I am convinced that the Soviet side's decision will force NATO to respond. I welcome the reduction of arms from the viewpoint of the correlation of forces in Europe, too—this is a well-considered move, one which does not threaten to upset the balance of forces. In view of the existing asymmetry it could even be a good basis for talks in the future. Nor should the propaganda significance of the new Soviet initiative be dismissed.

The withdrawal of 50,000 Soviet troops from three European countries in no way diminishes the Warsaw Pact's defensive capability. This applies to Hungary's security, too. I am convinced that the withdrawal of the Soviet troops will not make Hungary more vulnerable. These steps have been considered a hundred times, a thousand times over. This is the right decision.

[Kaverznev] Incidentally, I have heard the opinion expressed that the Soviet troops stationed in Hungary add nothing to the country's defensive capability—in fact, quite the reverse, that they are to some extent a destabilizing factor. What do you say to this?

[Sipos] We can scarcely examine all aspects of that most complex question right now. Our history shows that there was a temporary need for Soviet troops on Hungarian territory. This gave a certain psychological confidence to people, who wanted to build socialism in our country. I hope that we have now reached such a stage in society's development and such a level of confidence in international relations that Hungary can set an example for other countries by reducing conventional, traditional arms. Meanwhile, a NATO country such as Italy could reciprocate. When the question of our security has arisen during the various talks, we have set out our position in these terms: Our motherland's security is safeguarded not by the Soviet troops temporarily stationed here but also by the policy in the spirit of the new political thinking which the socialist countries are pursuing.

In conclusion, there is one more point I want to make. We would like to maintain our military collaboration with our Soviet comrades at the old level and even strengthen it in some sectors—particularly in view of the recent decision. And when the time comes for us to bid farewell to the Soviet military units we will organize a ceremonial send-off and, as is customary between good friends, we will thank our Soviet comrades for their help and for the fact that they have taught us many things. Believe me, I do not say this only out of politeness.

Aboimov Marks CSSR Treaty Anniversary

LD1212225288 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1740 GMT 12 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow, 12 Dec (TASS)—It is possible to say with certainty today, 45 years later, that the treaty of friendship, mutual aid, and postwar cooperation concluded in 1943 between the USSR and Czechoslovakia has not lost its historical significance, said Ivan Aboimov, deputy USSR minister of foreign affairs.

The treaty guaranteed the rebirth of a sovereign Czechoslovak republic, became the basis of its new foreign policy orientation, and laid the foundations of Soviet-Czechoslovak friendship and postwar cooperation, the Soviet diplomat stressed in an interview with a TASS correspondent. This document was one of the first international agreements of the World War II era in which firm guarantees of peace and the just settlement of relations in Europe after its liberation from Nazism were envisioned.

The practical implementation of the treaty, said Ivan Aboimov, created conditions for the development of broad-based and multilateral relations between the USSR and Czechoslovakia both on a bilateral basis and also within the framework of CEMA and the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

Political cooperation between the two fraternal countries is acquiring a new quality today. It has become fuller in content, devoid of formalism, and it takes more account of the specific features of each country's development. Economic cooperation has acquired a varied nature. Joint turnover each year totals more than R13 billion. More than 360 Soviet and Czechoslovak enterprises have set up direct contacts; and 14 joint collectives of scientists and specialists have been set up, as well as 3 international scientific-production associations and 2 joint laboratories. The CSSR is taking part in developing the productive capacities of the USSR's fuel and raw materials base, and in the reconstruction of light and food industry enterprises. The USSR is providing economic and technical assistance to the CSSR in equipping 28 industrial facilities.

Bilateral cooperation in the intellectual sphere has also acquired a varied nature, Ivan Aboimov stressed.

Since 1970, the new Soviet-Czechoslovak treaty on friendship, cooperation, and mutual assistance, which improves the interaction of the two countries, has been in effect. "At the same time, it is possible to say with full justification," said Aboimov, "that the ideas of the 1943 treaty remain in operation. The present anniversary is a reminder that the peaceful lives of the peoples of the USSR and the CSSR are the direct result of the close alliance of our countries, made firm by blood shed together in the struggle against Hitlerite fascism, and a symbol of our solidarity in the heavy moments of ordeal."

CSSR's Janak Meets Shcherbitskiy, Ends Visit

AU1512095188 Kiev RADYANSKA UKRAINA in Ukrainian 9 Dec 88 p 3

[RATAU report: "Useful Exchanges of Experiences"]

[Text] I. Janak, CPCZ Central Committee Presidium member and CPSL Central Committee secretary, ended his visit to the Ukraine with a visit to the V.I. Lenin "Elektronmash" production association in Kiev on 8 December.

The visitor was received by V.V. Shcherbitskiy, CPSU Central Committee Politburo member and Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee first secretary.

A concrete conversation was held with Kiev Obkom First Secretary G.I. Revenko. The subjects discussed were the accountability and election campaign in Kiev Oblast party organizations; the work carried out by the obkom bureau to democratize internal party life and to eliminate the command-and-order style of work; and the application of the principles of economic accountability, particularly of family and leasing contracting, in agriculture. While in Kagarlykskiy Rayon, Kiev Oblast, I. Janak familiarized himself with the raykom's activity to increase foodstuff supplies and to meet the social and cultural needs of people. At the "Peremoha" kolkhoz he inquired about the organization of farm production and about relations with processing enterprises and consumers.

During a meeting in Kiev Gorkom, K.I. Masik, Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee Politburo candidate member and gorkom first secretary, briefed the visitor on the progress made in restructuring organizational party and ideological work. He emphasized that, in the activity of party organizations, priority has been given to social development in the city and to meeting the needs of the working people.

I was very glad to be in the Soviet Union on a working visit, I. Janak said before his departure for home. The talks and meetings in Moscow and here in the Ukraine gave us an opportunity to see more clearly how the CPSU and party organizations are struggling to bring about restructuring under conditions of democratization and glasnost, and how were they accomplishing the tasks set by the 19th all-union party conference. For us, the experience of the CPSU is very important, and we will aspire to apply it in our work, in life.

I. Janak noted the importance of strengthening links between Slovakia and the Ukraine,, which maintain constant contacts along parliamentary and government lines. In referring to the bilateral agreement signed in

Uzhgorod on cooperation between the republics in the field of agriculture, he pointed out that this agreement signified a switchover from an exchange of experiences to direct cooperation among agricultural collectives. We have many spheres in which to expand and tighten up cooperation for our mutual advantage. Prospects for its further development are excellent, the CPSL Central Committee first secretary said.

Political & Social

Further Reportage on Aftermath of Earthquake

Number of Casualties Updated

LD1512194488 Moscow TASS in English 1927 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Yerevan December 15 TASS—The number of dead bodies retrieved in the quake-hit areas of Armenia in the past twenty-four hours is 509. One more survivor was found in the town of Spitak. 28 people died in hospitals.

The latest body count is 22,312.

4,668 people have been evacuated in an organised way from the disaster area in the past day.

Ryzhkov on Rescue Efforts

LD1512220488 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1930 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Interview with Nikolay Ivanovich Ryzhkov, chairman of the Council of Ministers and head of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo commission on the disaster in Armenia, by unidentified correspondent in Yerevan; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] Nikolay Ivanovich, how does the situation appear to you? Is there more organization now in terms of giving assistance to the victims?

[Ryzhkov] Yes, without question. If...[changes thought] The 1st day we visited the disaster area there was practically nothing organized there. Of course, humanly, this is quite understandable. The people were in a state of shock. People, of course, were not working; they were beside themselves. Therefore, to think about some sort of clear organization of work at that moment was simply not possible, and for that reason the 1st and 2d days were spent in our trying—to the greatest degree possible—to take charge of all work, to get it organized, as the state of the people's stress lessened. Moreover, of course, if we make comparisons even with the 2d day of the emergency, today there is a totally different picture.

Well, first of all, we closed the two towns that had suffered most and introduced a state of emergency. Because there was an enormous number of passenger cars and the towns were smashed to pieces, it was not possible to work there—either for the equipment or for rescuing—and because of the disorder there, terrible obstructions. For that reason we closed them, and all the cars and passengers vehicles approaching these towns—and these are essentially relatives who are arriving—stop outside the town at a special area; they stay there. According to information which the first deputy minister of internal affairs has now given, up to 30,000 cars daily are packed in these reservoirs near the towns. Before there were many more; they were all in the towns. Moreover, the amount of machinery is increasing daily. We have set up a special group of senior people, who have divided all the squares up into definite sectors, with machinery and personnel allocated to each sector. In other words, this has been put on an organized footing, although of course there are a great many shortages, because in an emergency it is very difficult to sort everything out precisely and clearly, very difficult. But today, from an organizational point of view, it is a different picture and it enables us today to completely monitor the whole situation, from the point of view of the work.

[Correspondent] Can you, as chairman of the commission, eliminate the confusion that has now arisen over the body count?

[Ryzhkov] Yes, I think here there is a completely different approach to determining the number of the dead. According to the estimates made by our experts, using both the experience of our own country and international experience...[changes thought] There is a definite methodogy, depending on the destruction, degree of destruction, force of the earthquake, and so on. So an estimate can be made on the basis of the number of the population, the time of day at which it happened. Thus it has been estimated that 40 or 45 thousand people may have died here. We have just again listened to a report by the comrades who are dealing with this question; they reported that, as of today, 21,000 bodies have been recovered. How many more there will be, we can only estimate as yet. We will know the figure when we have cleared away the last of the rubble; then we will be able to say how many have indeed died.

Commission Views Relief Efforts

LD1512221688 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1848 GMT 15 Dec 88

["Work of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo Commission"—TASS headline]

[Text] Yerevan, 15 Dec (TASS)—Accurate and efficient information is required in order to fully control a complex and rapidly changing situation. A discussion on this begins the working day of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo commission, at work in Armenia under the chairmanship of N.I. Ryzhkov. On 15 December, at the latest working meeting, a wide range of questions whose solution is decisive for the implementation of urgent measures to overcome the consequences of the natural disaster, were considered.

Results of the work during the last 24 hours were reported by F.T. Sarkisyan, chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR; E.S. Gabrielyan, the republic's health minister; R.A. Sukhudyan, minister of trade of the Armenian SSR; and S.Ye. Sarukhanov, USSR deputy minister of trade; Ye.I. Sizenko, deputy chairman of USSR Gosagroprom and USSR minister; D.T. Yazov, member of the CPSU Central Committee

Politburo commission, and USSR defense minister; V.I. Manayev, deputy chairman of the USSR Committee of People's Control; S.A. Shalayev, chairman of the AUCCTU; and Yu.P. Batalin and L.A. Voronin, deputy chairmen of the USSR Council of Ministers.

Along with the relief work, it was noted at the conference, priority is now being given to tough measures to maintain public health in the stricken areas. At the present time, there is not a single pocket of infectious diseases in these areas. Nine health teams to combat epidemics have been set up in Leninakan, and seven in Spitak. In Leninakan the first bath and laundry train is in operation to serve the population. Temporary shower rooms have been provided for the military contingent. The people working in the earthquake zones are receiving the necessary medical supplies and drugs.

At the same time it was noted that the assignments given 3 days go by the commission to R.A. Minasyna, the minister of municipal services, in particular for the town of Spitak, have not been fully carried out. The problem of the water supply in the town is acute, there are not enough mobile toilets, and the removal of refuse has not been organized. The commission demanded that the minister report on the implementation of these immediate tasks by the next meeting.

The disaster zone must become in actual fact, and not merely in words, a zone of enhanced social care, it was stressed at the meeting. Instead of dry rations, hot meals are now being provided for the population and for the rescuers in the stricken areas. In Leninakan, several public catering enterprises have been opened and hot meals are being delivered to people in thermos flasks at their places of work. It was noted at the same time that, for the time being, not all the resources which the country has made available to the republic, are being fully utilized.

In a number of localities food is being distributed in an uncontrolled manner, and technical equipment is operating poorly. Part of the equipment, as it turned out, had been removed from the area of work on the pretext of repair. In connection with this it was proposed that a repair base be deployed on the spot so as not to lose time idly driving equipment back and forth.

Before the end of the current week an inventory will be carried out of dozens of villages, which will make it possible to begin large-scale restoration work. When planning a new development, it has been decided that seismic conditions and the traditions of national architecture should be taken into account to the maximum. Fifty-five oblasts of the RSFSR have assumed patronage over Armenia's stricken villages. From Kazakhstan, hundreds of collapsible, insulated tents have been delivered. In winter they have provided universal temporary housing for the mountainous sites here.

At the meeting the commission also defined measures to preserve the village herd which has remained without supervision in a number of places, and on the sanitation and disinfection operation in the countryside.

Civil defense units continue to arrive in the areas hit by the natural disaster to take part in the restoration work. A new stage in clearing the rubble is approaching in which demolition experts will participate. They are being charged with clearing the ruins that pose a threat to the population. But this work will only begin after all the living and the dead have been removed from under the ruins.

Once again serious attention has been paid to the process of evacuating children, women, and the elderly. It has been noted that the explanatory work conducted among the population has started to yield results. Whereas before people were afraid and agreed only reluctantly to leave the disaster areas even temporarily, and especially to go beyond the bounds of Armenia (the sanatoriums in the republic are already overcrowded) people are now lining up to get on the evacuation trains and convoys of motor vehicles. The first reports from the accommodation locations—in particular from Krasnodar Kray, from Georgia—played their part in encouraging people to make the journey. The victims are welcomed in a fraternal, sincere, hospitable way. This is rapidly becoming known throughout the entire republic.

People are not only going to sanatoriums. Requests are coming in to be taken to new places of residence together with their goods and what remains of their personal belongings. The trade unions are attentive to such requests. People are being provided with transport free of charge and are aided in reaching their destination. This is something completely new that has emerged in the evacuation work literally over the last few days. The decision of the trade unions has been widely supported by the population. In all, 37,978 people have been evacuated from the zone. The session of the commission received a report on the fulfillment of instructions concerning the orderly unloading, storage, and delivery to the victims of the relief consignments that are coming in from all parts of the country and from abroad. Thanks to resolute measures, proper accounting and order have been instituted in this matter. The emotional response of millions of people has been reinforced on the spot by strict personal responsibility and order, the aid being channelled with precision and purposefulness exclusively to those in distress.

The influx of aid continues to increase. Altogether some 1,500 foreign specialists are now at work side by side with the Soviet medical personnel and rescue workers. During their tours of the stricken areas, the members of the Politburo commission had many meetings with foreign specialists. There was sharp criticism at the session of individual instances of poorly organized reception of people arriving from abroad. All the responsible organizations were called upon to improve the state of affairs as quickly as possible and report on the fulfillment of these instructions at a future session of the commission.

At a time of tribulations, good organization and order is invaluable. The session discussed the resumption of specific tasks by the rayon party committees and local soviets in the disaster areas, and the importance of the personal example set by the leader and a Communist in normalizing the situation and in creating an atmosphere of calm and constructiveness and in overcoming common misfortune.

The CPSU Central Committee Politburo commission is working in the republic in an atmosphere of broad glasnost. Reporters are regularly invited to its working sessions. The 15 December session was broadcast on television. It is characteristic that one of the main news items over the past 24 hours mentioned by N.I. Ryzhkov, chairman of the commission, was the fact that the first issue of Leninakan's local newspaper has been published since the earthquake.

In the afternoon, the members of the commission took a trip to Kirovakan. There are considerably fewer victims and less destruction there than in Leninakan and Spitak. During a conversation with the people of Kirovakan, which took place in the city's central square, N.I. Ryzhkov announced that a construction detachment from the Ukraine would provide fraternal assistance in rebuilding Kirovakan. Without waiting for reinforcements, however, he stressed, everyone must find his place in this work.

The town's inhabitants cordially thanked all those who have stretched forth their hand to render fraternal assistance and support to the Armenian people in their misfortune at this difficult time. Our multinational motherland, they said, has eased our grief over the heavy losses and casualties and inspired hope for the future. The townspeople are in a calmer and more confident frame of mind than they were 4 days ago.

Rescue work was ended today; already the eighth train with old men, women, and children traveling to spas has been prepared for dispatch.

N.I. Ryzhkov and N.N. Slyunkov went onto the platform, entered the carriages, and had a heart-to-heart talk with children and their mothers. On the faces of these departing there were both tears of grief and of gratitude. Getting out of a carriage, the members of the commission again found themselves in a dense throng of townsfolk and told them one more good piece of news: This evening the first Yerevan-Moscow train would pass along the restored section of the railway. The passengers on it would be residents of Leninakan and Spitak.

There is unchildlike sorrow in the eyes of 13 boys and girls, pupils of Stepanavan medical boarding school No 21. They saw how the walls of the blocks of flats collapsed and survived the death of their comrades. After the tragedy 23 residents of the boarding school were immediately taken to Yerevan. Ten were found by their parents. The other thirteen are living and studying here. This evening, they were invited to the Yerevan "Komitas" state conservatory, where the all-union headquarters for emergency aid to Armenia's children and mothers is operating. Here they were visited by N.I. Ryzhkov and N.N. Slyunkov. They questioned the children about how they are doing and what care is being provided for them.

The children are gradually recovering from the shock; they are studying, surrounded by sympathetic attention. The V.I. Lenin Soviet Children's Fund has set up a working headquarters in Yerevan. It is very important for the whole country, for Armenia, said N.I. Ryzhkov, in conversation with members of the fund's board led by its chairman, A.A. Likhanov, to mobilize the entire public and the Komsomol to help the children, so that no child feels lonely in our big country.

Taking part in the meetings with working people and children was also S.G. Arutyunyan, first secretary of the Armenian Communist Party Central Committee.

Time is inexorable. There is less and less hope of saving those buried beneath the rubble. But the rescue workers are continuing their noble work. Over the last 24 hours, a further 509 dead and one survivor—in Spitak—have been freed. Twenty eight people have died in the hospitals. The total number of dead has reached 22,312.

Over the 24 hour period, 4,668 people have been evacuated from the disaster areas in an organized manner.

Commission Visits Kirovakan

LD1612002588 [Editorial Report] Moscow Television Service in Russian at 1800 GMT on 15 December in its "Vremya" newscast carries a 15-minute report by correspondent Tikhomirov on a visit to Kirovakan by the CPSU Central Committee Politburo commission established to overcome the effects of the 7 December earthquake. The commission is led by Nikolay Ivanovich Ryzhkov, who is accompanied on his visit by Artyunyan, first secretary of the Armenian Communist Party Central Committee; N.S. Konarev, USSR railways minister, and Stepan Alekseyevich Shalayev, chairman of the AUCCTU.

Correspondent Tikhomirov explains that the Politburo commission is traveling by bus because travel by air is unthinkable. The video shows the view from a vehicle traveling along a foggy road. Ryzhkov and entourage are seen on foot approaching a group of unidentified men:

[Ryzhkov] "What do these initials mean: VGS-6?

[Men] "Mine rescue.

[Ryzhkov] "We guessed that it meant mine rescue.

[Man] "We are from Sverdlovsk, Nikolay Ivanovich.

[Ryzhkov] "We are from the same area, then?

[Men] "Yes.

[Ryzhkov] "Good, men. How many of you are there?

[Man] "There are 15 from Sverdlosvsk.

[Ryzhkov] "And how many from Moscow?

[Man] "Twenty-three [words indistinct]

[Man] "Where are you going now?

[Ryzhkov] "To Leninakan."

Tikhomirov describes the scene of destruction as the bus passes through Spitak. Video then shows Kirovakan station, where reconstruction work is under way. Ryzhkov and entourage are shown walking through the station and talking to people. Video shows a train in the station in which women and children are seated. Ryzhkov is again shown on the platform talking to people.

[Ryzhkov] "The most important thing is to take people away from here for the winter so they can spend it elsewhere. We think they should stay away until spring.

[Man] "Thank you.

[Ryzhkov] "The conditions there are good. We have already taken out 16,000 people. In the past few days we have taken out 16,000 people. Perhaps some of you saw on television yesterday where they showed people settling in there and making themselves at home, in health centers and sanatoriums.

[Arutyunyan] "Where people go for their holidays.

[Man] Nikolay Ivanovich, [words indistinct]

[Ryzhkov] "The men will remain; you will be busy with building work.

[Tikhomirov, addressing Konarev] "How many trains have there been?

[Konarev] "Three have left. That is, three today. There have been ten since the start. Another two will go today.

[Tikhomirov] "How many people is that?

[Konarev] "There are 700 to 800 people in each train; 700 to 800.

[Tikhomirov] "So, about 4,500 today. That is mainly women and children.

[Konarev] "Women and children and some grandmothers.

[Tikhomirov] "So you have reopened the railway line?

[Konarev] "One hour from now the first train on the Moscow-Yerevan-Moscow route heading for Moscow will arrive. Permanent regular traffic is starting up.

[Tikhomirov, addressing Shalayev] "Stepan Alekseyevich, where are these people going? Does each one know their destination?

[Shalayev] "They all know. The people getting on this train know where they are going. They will be met there and each will be taken to treatment centers, individual boarding houses, rest homes, and from the very first day they will be cared for. They will be given material aid according to each member of the family who comes.

[Tikhomirov] "That is the first thing, and you say that food will be provided for free?

[Shalayev] "Absolutely free. All food will be free. Tomorrow in (?Adler), the first school conducted in the Armenian language will begin working. In 2 days a school conducted in Armenian will begin operating at sanatoriums in Georgia. You see, we have made provision for that, too. Those who want their lessons conducted in Armenian will have them in Armenian, those who want Russian, in Russian. Nikolay Ivanovich has just suggested that we organize kindergartens in those sanatoriums. We are organizing these kindergartens, and I think that the ones to look after the children in these kindergartens will be the mothers themselves, who are traveling with their children.

[Tikhomirov] "Good. Thank you."

Correspondent Tikhomirov introduces another conversation in the square with Ryzhkov and Artyunyan, who are seen addressing a crowd.

[Ryzhkov] "We've just been watching the evacuation of children, women, and the elderly. We again ask you—all the children remaining here and all the mothers who can leave—please leave. We have an evacuation point here. They will be placed in sanatoriums and vacation homes. To date we have evacuated 16,000 people from all these towns. They have been placed in sanatoriums in Armenia and Georgia, and that trainload we were watching is going to Adler....

[Arutyunyan] "In Krasnodar Kray.

[Ryzhkov] "In Krasnodar Kray. They will live there, we figure, until the spring, until the spring. That is while it's cold and until we put things in order here, with housing and so on. So they are going to live there. They will be entirely provided for by the state, that is, they will be fed there—the mothers, the elderly, and the children. Those who can work can do so, and those who can't—well, we are adopting a decision which, you know, will be published in the papers in the next few days. We are now finalizing all the proposals regarding material—compensation of material loss and the provision of material assistance. Over the next few days we will publish the decision of the USSR Council of Ministers in the papers. As for the women who won't be working there, with children, we propose paying them 50 percent of their pay, so as to somehow support...

[Arutyunyan, interrupting] "So that they are entirely provided for by the state.

[Ryzhkov] "Yes, entirely provided for by the state.

[Arutyunyan] "So that they can buy something.

[Ryzhkov] "But the overall situation, comrades, the overall situation is gradually being normalized. There remains today a very great deal of work to be done in Spitak, of course, a very great deal of work, but gradually, step by step, the piles of rubble are being destroyed. There are still, however, as our comrades have been saying, about 20 to 30 sites where everything has to be lifted. The factories have been particularly badly hit, particularly badly. A very great deal of work is being done in Leninakan, and we think that in the near future, we shall be able to finally dig out those who died there. Equipment has now arrived from all over the country. Trainloads of equipment are coming; teams are coming from all over the place. Thus, the time when we had a shortage of everything has passed. Now we cannot even unload the wagons fast enough to dispatch things to these centers. So a lot of work is now being done. We have begun working on the countryside, comrades. Unfortunately, there are very serious, well, repercussions in the countryside as well.

"We had calculated that 28 of our villages have been totally devastated. We have spent 2 days flying around—the first secretary and I, with Comrade Slyunkov—all the areas, the rural areas, and we counted more than 50 villages that have been completely devastated, more than 50. We are now setting up special detachments there, setting up headquarters, dispatching tents there, sending medical supplies—everything needed to help, to some extent, the rural population, because they have also lost their houses and so on. So that's the situation. As for what is being done in the country, you can obviously see and are aware of this. They are supporting you; the whole country is supporting you. It's difficult even to imagine what people are doing today to support the Armenian people.

"Much help is coming from abroad, including a great deal from the Armenian communities in the diaspora. Medicines are arriving. Tents are arriving, as well as medical equipment. We were at a hospital in Yerevan yesterday. The weather yesterday was unsuitable for flying, so we couldn't fly anywhere. We were in Yerevan. Everything is being done to save the people who are in the hospitals. A very large amount of equipment has arrived, and there are no problems there now.

"Everything is being done, as much as possible to save the people in the hospitals. For your information, around 5,000 people are in the hospital today—5,000. Everything is being done there to save them, although there are very, very serious cases. So, comrades, I have told you in brief what is being done. Everything is being done to, so to speak, to put things in order here.

"Well, Mikhail Sergeyevich spoke here and told you—and I wish to repeat—that we are even holding back construction detachments a little bit now. They are ready now in the Ukraine and in the RSFSR. We are holding them back a bit in order to give people a chance to clear up here. Plans need to be drawn up, and then people will arrive and start to get on with building work. We think that in the course of 2 years we shall do the work: 2 years.

"What's it going to cost? Our estimate was R5 billion. We now believe that we were wrong. Evidently more will be needed. Well, we shall find the money in the country to help your areas.

"Now, regarding work. The question arises, of course, that the men are gradually staying behind on their own. Of course work has to start. First of all, we shall be rebuilding the factories. People who worked at factories—you will gradually return to work at factories. People who did not work at factories, but elswhere—we shall be including you in the construction organizations, the construction detachments that will arrive. And you will be working there. You will be rebuilding with your own hands everything that has been destroyed.

"I think that our task for the immediate future is to ensure that everyone joins in the work. It is time, as the saying goes, for us to commence normal life. That is what I wanted to tell you, comrades, that is the information I had for you.

"The calamity, of course, has been very great. But we feel that thanks to the fact that the entire Soviet people have rallied together, we shall cope with this disaster. I am convinced of that. And we now feel that we shall get the better of things here. As for the fact that people died—may their memory never fade, as the phrase goes. But you can't bring them back. And we have to do everything we can to get on with our lives.

[Arutyunyan] "Allow me to say a word or two. The CPSU Central Committee Politburo commission which Nikolay Ivanovich Ryzhkov heads is, together with Nikolay Nikitovich Slyunkov, carrying out a vast amount of useful work. I can tell you that I cannot imagine what sort of situation the republic would be in if the comrades from Moscow had not come here and had not coordinated the whole complex of problems.

"A thousand-and-one issues arise and have to be tackled in the course of each day. Very intensive and concrete work is being done to implement the necessary practical measures to eliminate the consequences of the earthquake. The Politburo commission goes out on site every day. We have been in villages. Where have we been? In Stepanavanskiy, Aragatskiy, (?Bugarskiy) and (?Okuryanskiy) Rayons. This is our third visit to you. What I want to say is that, at the same time, good organization and discipline is needed locally. We, and particularly the male part of the population, must now get organized in order to tackle the most active and energetic part of reconstruction work in the city of Kirovakan here and join in the work at enterprises.

"What we need now are good organization and discipline, and as for all sorts of gossipers and demagogues who today want to make political capital, we must give it to them in the teeth. I ask you, I appeal to all of you: The town of Kirovakan must set an example. Enough listening to these talkers and demagagues. That is what needs to be done. Otherwise they are playing on the situation, terrorizing and intimidating people. Enough! An end must be put to this demagogy in our republic. We shall go and struggle against them with you.

[Ryzhkov] "You know comrades, it's a good thing that he raised this subject himself. It would have simply been awkward for me to raise it. Sometimes I am simply astonished. After all, the Armenian people are talented, courageous, and intelligent. Why don't you rebuff these chatterers? Why don't you rebuff these renegades who are consistently inciting people, even at this difficult hour when everything possible needs to be done, when all feuds ought to be forgotten?

"At such a moment they are tossing people all sorts of rumors; they are disorganizing the situation. Just look, we are taking children out. We have made sanatoriums available. We have taken 50,000 people out of sanatoriums in order to house Armenian children and women. There is a center in Leninakan which is registering people and telling them which bus to board or what train to get on, and so on. And they go out and people immediately appear who say: Don't leave under any circumstances! And so on. Why is this being done—in the name of what? Listen, give a final rebuff to these people. You mustn't go on like this! Come on, get down to it properly! That's the way to do it!

[Arutyunyan] "What is more, Nikolay Ivanovich, they don't do a kopeck's worth for the republic. They chatter but do nothing useful for the republic. They just chatter away.

[Ryzhkov] "Yes! Well comrades, all the best. We are now going to go do some work at the headquarters."

Video shows Ryzhkov, Slyunkov, and Arutyunan in the town square.

Defense Minister on Rescue Work

LD1512183688 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1600 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] The country's Armed Forces are giving great assistance to the rescue, repair, and restoration work in the suffering Armenian regions. Their vital contribution in eliminating the consequences of the earthquake was noted at a meeting of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo commission. Our correspondent interviewed Yazov, member of the commission, USSR defense minister, candidate member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo, and Army general:

[Begin Yazov recording] The earthquake was of such a destructive force that not just some buildings but industrial buildings, works, factories, and combines—such as the flour-milling combine in Spitak, a combine for storing bread grain, for the production of mixed fodder—also collapsed.

The railway was destroyed literally at one sweep. The crater at the epicenter was up to 6 meters deep. The land simply opened up and disintegrated. It seems that at that moment a train was passing; all the carriages were strewn along the railway line itself to the sides, to the left and right. The live circuits and the substations were destroyed. Do you know that the railway has already begun to function again? Here there were no railway battalions; they arrived from other places and in 4 or 5 days or so restored the railway. At the moment two more railway battalions are on the way; they are going to work on the sidings so that carriages can be put there, carriages for those specialists—construction workers—who will come and live in them.

When the landing troops arrived in Spitak and began to explore the school, and after they saw how many little children lay in the flattened classroom, they refused lunch and dinner and worked until they had extracted all the corpses. They also managed to save some who were alive. It is not known that the landing forces and other troops collected more than R3 million right on premises that had been destroyed from banks. A large amount of valuables, valued at R5 million, were piled up especially in the department store. These valuables will be returned to the state. [end recording]

Nuclear Plant Operating 'Normally'

LD1412112088 Moscow TASS in English 0913 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 14 TASS—Has the Armenian nuclear power plant located 30 km from Yerevan, near the village of Metsamor, withstood the earthquake? Is it functioning today? Has anything been damaged there?

These and other questions have been answered by Migran Vartanyan, director of the plant, in an interview to the weekly MOSCOW NEWS.

He said that the nuclear power plant was situated in a seismically active zone and had been built with due account for forecasts for the region: possible earthquakes with a magnitude under point 8. It is fitted out with a special seismic protection system which automatically activates if the magnitude of tremors reaches point 6, and the nuclear power plant stops functioning.

This was not needed on December 7, and the power plant was not stopped. It continued to function normally. Seismological records show that a series of tremors with a magnitude of 5.5 lasted for 200 seconds. They were followed by six magnitude-three peaks. All the equipment was examined and no defects were found.

A group of Moscow specialists is working at the nuclear power plant. It includes reactor designers, mechanical engineers, electricians, thermotechnicians and builders who are thoroughly examining all the facilities.

At present both blocks of the station are working at their nominal capacity of 815 megawatts. All the staff members know what steps they should take in case of emergency, Migran Vartanyan pointed out.

Yerevan Commandant Cited

NC1612082288 Yerevan Domestic Service in Armenian 0300 GMT 16 Dec 88

[Text] Life in the republic is [words indistinct] to assistance. This is what Colonel General Albert Makashov, commandant of the Yerevan Special District, told Sarkis Sarkisyan:

On 15 December the (?efforts by the USSR Defense Ministry) devoted to restoring the earthquake area continued. Some 20,000 people, 700 [word indistinct] engineering equipment, and 1,500 automobiles are working to this end. More than 100,000 (?beds), about 6,000 tents, 22,000 (?items of clothing), and thousands of hats and gloves have been given to [word indistinct] the victims of the earthquake. Food is being served in (?field restaurants). A field water-distribution network for (?200,000) cubic meters of water has been set up for Spitak City [words indistinct]. [Words indistinct] have been set up. During the cleaning up of the rubble, the soldiers collected more than R800,000 worth of valuable objects, all of which have been handed over to the proper authorities.

The situation in Yerevan and in the republic's other rayons where a special status and curfew are in effect is being (?guarded) by the soldiers. The day before last, curfew officials inspected 1,146 people, and 179 [words indistinct] were detained on various charges. Some 294 automobiles were inspected, and 21 were impounded. Firearms and edged weapons (?were not found). At the same time, [words indistinct], that recently (?hooligan) elements have become active. Robberies have taken place. (?The looting of items) arriving at Zvartnots airport has been noted, and the military command has placed the airport under its protection.

Commandant on Relief Efforts

PM1612113188 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 16 Dec 88 First Edition p 1

[Report on interview with Lieutenant General A. Makashov, military commandant of the special region, by TASS correspondents Yu. Kankanyan and O. Moskovskiy: "Just One Day"; date, place not given]

[Text] The life of the republic, subjected to a stern ordeal, is complex and varied. Here is what TASS correspondents were told by Lieutenant General A. Makashov, military commandant of the special region:

"The buildup of forces and facilities brought in to eliminate the consequences of the earthquake through USSR Defense Ministry channels continued 15 December. To this end up to 30,000 personnel, 770 units of engineering equipment, and 1,500 trucks have been put into operation.

"About 6,000 tents with room for over 100,000 people, 22,000 padded jackets and trousers (mainly for the rural regions), and thousands of hats with earflaps and warm mittens have been handed over for the permanent use of the population affected by the natural disaster. Hot food is being prepared at the army field kitchens.

"Subunits of the pipe-laying units have laid a field main pipeline with a capacity of 2,400 cubic meters of water a day to supply water to Spitak. Some seven mobile army refueling points have been deployed.

"During the clearing of the rubbish the troops collected valuables worth over R800,000. They have all been handed over to the appropriate organs.

"The situation in Yerevan and the rayons of the republic where a special situation and curfew have been established is being controlled by the troops. Over the past 24 hours the military commandants' posts service has checked 1,146 people, detained 179 for various reasons, and arrested 8. They checked 294 vehicles and detained 21. No firearms or cold weapons were discovered.

"At the same time it must be noted that in recent days criminal elements have been activated. There have been thefts, and private vehicles have been stolen. Instances of the embezzling of freight and medical supplies arriving at 'Zvartnots' airport have been noted. The military commandant's post has put the airport under guard.

"Citizens are particularly angered by cases of looting in the disaster regions. Thus, Leninakan inhabitants A. Avetisyan and S. Navasadryan stole a crate of oil and

R200 at store No 15 of the Leninakan industrial goods trading organization. Together with militia workers, inhabitants of Nor-Adzhi village, Abovyanskiy Rayon, on their way from Spitakskiy Rayon to Aboyan, arrested canteen worker Kh. Ayvazyan, in whose possesion they discovered and from whom they confiscated six pairs of women's shoes and other goods he had stolen from store while rendering aid in Spitakskiy Rayon."

In just one day the servicemen and militiamen have had to resolve these questions in the regions which suffered from the earthquake.

Damage in Kelbadzharskiy Described

NC1512185388 Baku Domestic Service in Azeri 1700 GMT 13 Dec 88

[Text] The earthquake which occurred on 7 December caused saddening results in the Kelbadzharskiy Rayon as well. No one was killed. Strong tremors were recorded in Suzuzluk village, which is 30 km to the east of the rayon center. Kolkhoz (?installations), shops, and school buildings have become unusable. Fourty-eight families have been forced to evacuate their places of residence because their buildings were seriously damaged.

The rayon's (?Darshak), Lev, Seidlyar, Demirchidam, (?Kueydere), (?Pulutlu), Alchaly, (?Issizova), and other villages were also damaged by the earthquake. The lands were [word indistinct] in a number of places and large depressions occurred in rural areas. A commission has been created within the framework of the Kelbadzharskiy Rayispolkom, which is dealing with the situation.

Shahvalet Karachev, who is the chairman of the commission, told the following to an AZERINFORM correspondent: The damage the earthquake caused in the rayon is estimated at R25 million. We are doing everything within our power to remove the results of the natural disaster. A large force of workers and technical machinery has been mobilized.

Telephone, Power Situation Noted

LD1512114888 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1005 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Leninakan, 15 Dec, (TASS)—Our special correspondents report: Rescue work is in its 9th day in the earthquake stricken Armenian city of Leninakan, where a substantial part of the housing stock was turned into piles of debris. The rescue efforts from all the union republics and from foreign nations continue to be concentrated on the speedy clearing of rubble and freeing the trapped people who are still alive.

But today signs of life are seen in the city. Vans marked "Post Office" are traveling the rutted streets. They have relieved the strain on air transportation and taken over their own immediate functions: delivering the periodicals, letters, and parcels that have mounted up in Yerevan.

So far the detachment of postal workers is small—just over 50. They will deliver the morning mail, then take up shovels to dig out the city's communications centers as quickly as possible. Specialists who have arrived from other USSR cities are bringing the least damaged telephone exchange, with 5,000 lines, back to life. Now 2,000 lines are in operating order. At this time only some 100 telephones are operating in the city. The operational headquarters for eliminating the aftermath of the earthquake has tasked the communications workers with setting up telephones within 3-4 days in all the tent camps for rescuers and residents and in the city's most important centers and services. A new telephone directory has been duplicated, though in only a small edition, it is true. Three mobile post offices are operating. So far telephone connections between towns have been via satellite communications, but today a special telephone line was opened and the teleprinters started chattering.

Lights powered by a mobile power station have come on in the city, television screens have lit up in the tents and in the one- to four-story houses that are standing, and mobile radio stations have begun operating. However, thus far only very few—one could say hardly any—of the streets and squares are lit, and only 30 of the 900 sites that need 24-hour rubble clearance are illuminated. New electric power lines and substations are urgently needed everywhere to provide night lighting.

Work Restoring Railroads

PM1412191988 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 15 Dec 88 Morning Edition p 6

[R. Ignatev report of statement by First Deputy Minister of Railways G. Fadeyev: "The Trains Are Going Direct"; date, place not given]

[Text] The Ministry of Railways. G. Fadeyev, first deputy minister, has given the following account:

We have many problems with the transportation of fuel. Yet without fuel, the equipment being delivered to the disaster area cannot operate. Tank cars of fuel are arriving from everywhere in small batches of five to seven units. But we need to put together whole trains. This is taking time. However, we are taking all the measures necessary to avoid hold-ups. Incidentally, these trains are now covering 800-850 km per day, instead of the usual 400-450 km.

As you know, as a result of the earthquake Nalband station was turned into a crater. Much the same is true of Spitak. In Leninakan the earthquake completely destroyed the locomotive and car depot. Many railroad workers have perished, hundreds have been injured, and 25,000 have been made homeless. This is considerably complicating our work. Armenian railroad workers had, as an emergency measure, to carry out a redeployment and to transfer a number of posts to other, neighboring stations. In addition we have formed 200 locomotive teams and dispatched them there, together with 50 powerful locomotives.

Incidentally, despite the fact that 40 km of track was destroyed, electricity supply, communication, and automatic blocking lines were damaged on 80 km of track, and six traction substations were put out of action, passenger trains never stopped running. Trains from Tbilisi to Yerevan were directed along a roundabout route via Baku, which extended the journey by 24 hours. Now the trains are going directly again. Within a short time a transport branch line of the mountain section of the railroad has been reequipped. In the past it was used only for freight trains. The route is dangerous, with high gradients and close turns. Railroad workers have made this line safe. Trains have been fitted with special brakes, additional locomotives have been coupled to the trains, and speed restrictions have been introduced.

On the night of 13-14 December working traffic opened on the section between Leninakan and Kirovakan. The electricity supply and contact network is currently being restored there. Hitherto trains were being pulled by diesel locomotives.

On 15 December we are planning to dispatch train No 55 from Yerevan to Moscow. It will leave the capital of Armenia and travel along the restored section under electric traction. In some places tracks were buried under 70,000 cubic meters of rocks, with individual bolders weighing 20-30 tonnes. This made clearing the track difficult.

National Bodies Continue Aid to Quake Area

Politburo Approves Aid

LD1512190488 Moscow TASS in English 1828 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 15 TASS—The Politburo of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee has approved the USSR Council of Ministers' proposals on aid to the population in earthquake-hit Soviet Armenia.

Taking into account the immense dimensions of the tragedy, the people affected by the quake will be paid lump sums, their lost property will be compensated.

The cost of houses, garden cabins, sheds, live-stock, vehicles and household belongings will be fully reimbursed, with payments under social insurance take into account.

Issues of paying pension to quake victims, job allocation and payment to workers of enterprises, institutions and organisations destroyed in the calamity have been resolved.

Benefits related to pension schemes covering children who lost their parents have been fixed. Women with pre-school age children, who lost job due to the earthquake, will be paid their mean monthly salary, their work record will be considered unbroken for a period of up to six months.

All these measures, combined with the large-scale relief effort to help Armenia overcome the grave consequences of the quake extended by the Soviet Government and all Soviet republics, by the Soviet people will help restore the normal pace of life in Armenia.

The Politburo expressed profound gratitude to the governments, public organisations and individuals in foreign countries and international organisations that responded to the calamity that struck the Armenian people and extended invaluable aid to the quake victims.

Party Allocates R50 Million

LD1512163088 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1500 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow, 15 Dec (TASS)—It is reported here today that the CPSU Central Committee has adopted a special decision on the allocation of R50 million from the CPSU's special purposes budget in order to provide aid to those stricken by the earthquake in Armenia.

A thousand places are being provided for families left homeless in the CPSU Central Committee Administration of Affairs sanatoriums in the towns of Gagra, Krasnodar, Kislovodsk, and Nalchik. This administration's boarding houses and resthomes in the Moscow area will take 1,000 people—children of school age and their mothers and families stricken by the earthquake. The expenditure relating to the conveyance and stay of the victims will be met from the funds of the party budget.

Freight vehicles, buses, machinery and material and technical resources are being put at the disposal of the Armenia Communist Party Central Committee from CPSU reserves. Volunteer qualified workers and engineering and technical staff have been selected from the concerns of the CPSU Central Committee Administration of Affairs who will go to work in the disaster area as part of a mechanized convoy which is being formed.

Muscovites Send Aid

PM1512163088 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 15 Dec 88 Second Edition p 2

[TASS report: "Muscovites for Armenia"]

[Text] There is no enterprise, organization, or institution in the capital today that has not participated in the most active way in helping the victims of the earthquake in Armenia.

Thousands of Muscovites and labor collectives reacted instantly to the news of the fraternal people's terrible tragedy. A stream of people poured into the donor stations (nearly 5,000 liters of blood was given). Large-scale collections of warm clothes began (34 tonnes were collected).

The very next day a city headquarters was set up in Moscow to coordinate operations and give assistance to the population of the Armenian SSR who were victims of the earthquake. It comprises representatives of Moscow CPSU Gorkom, Moscow Gorispolkom, and other party and economic organizations from the capital and its rayons. Yu. Belyakov, first deputy chairman of Moscow Gorispolkom, heads its work.

Our main task in this initial stage was to make the work that was under way efficient and coordinated and to ensure that priority measures were carried out, he said. The sum of R5 million was appropriated from the Moscow Gorispolkom budget to help the disaster victims, and the necessary quantity of food and warm clothing was prepared. Some 1,000 freight cars with 12,000 tonnes of potatoes and 7,000 tonnes of cabbages, vegetables, and other products are setting off for the fraternal republic.

The total funds collected and appropriated by state and cooperative organizations, enterprises, and institutions and inhabitants of Moscow for Account No 700412 already amount to R26.7 million. More than 400 large-capacity trucks, cranes, bulldozers, excavators, and other equipment are being sent to Leninakan, where 1,500 Moscow construction and installation workers and representatives of other professions will soon form a large detachment.

In view of the fact that Leninakan and the local organs have much complex and urgent work, it is envisaged that all the groups of specialists and workers will provide for themselves entirely and operate autonomously.

Here in Moscow the rayon headquarters and Moscow Komsomol Gorkom are also doing much work to help the earthquake victims. The city headquarters and the capital's organizations are also actively involved in the work of helping victims of the disaster who are arriving in Moscow.

A large number of Armenian inhabitants who were left homeless are now arriving in Moscow. Among them are many women, children, and old people. Some 11,000 places have been created in the capital and the Moscow region for accommodation in winter-type pioneer camps, forest sanatorium schools, boarding schools, and children's homes.

Ukraine Provides Assistance

AU1512160888 Kiev PRAVDA UKRAINY in Russian 11 Dec 88 pp 1, 3

[RATAU report: "From the Bottom of Our Hearts"]

[Text] At this time the Ukraine's party and Komsomol organizations, enterprise labor collectives, projects, institutions, kolkhozes, and sovkhozes all share the desire to help fraternal Armenia, which has been hit by the destructive earthquake. A republic-level headquarters has been set up to provide efficient help.

Building detachments are being formed in the Ukraine to work in Armenia. In Ternopol a detachment with the necessary construction materials and equipment (cranes, excavators, bulldozers, and so forth) is ready for departure. Two lifting trucks and a tank truck have been shipped by the "Sumpromstroy" construction and assembly combine; a lifting truck, four crane operators, and eight gas welders have been sent by Zhitomir enterprises; two students' detachments are ready for departure at the Kiev Civil Aviation Engineering Institute; construction detachments have been formed at Kiev University, the Poltava Construction Engineering Institute, and at other higher schools in the republic.

Thousands of the republic's working people have donated blood. The staff of the Kiev institutes for the problems of casting and strength problems under the Ukrainian SSR Academy of Sciences, the inhabitants of Mlinovskiy Rayon in Rovno Oblast, Stavishchenkiy Rayon in Kiev Oblast, and others have shown a great deal of energy. In Vinnitsa, 700 students hurried to donate blood free of charge. Many foreigners studying at the Ukraine's higher educational institutions have declared their willingness to help the people of Armenia. The Cuban national group has resolved to donate blood to the earthquake victims.

Oblast, city, and rayon groups have been formed in oblasts to give first aid to the victims. Housing facilities are being registered everywhere for the homeless. Zaleshchitskiy, Buchatskiy, and Shumskiy Rayons in Ternopol Oblast have offered accommodation and jobs for 30 families. The Samoylov family from the village of Konstantinovka in Gornostayevskiy Rayon, Kherson Oblast, has volunteered to accept four children from Armenia. Vinnitsa Oblast is willing to accommodate 1,000 children in Pioneers camps, and 500 adults in sanatoriums and preventive medicine clinics. In Chernigov Oblast, 756 beds have been prepared in 8 sanatoriums and preventive medicine clinics, and 205 new houses have been assigned for this purpose in the countryside.

Voroshilovgrad Oblast Trade Union Council is organizing the reception of the victims in 27 preventive medicine clinics with 3,000 beds and in 9 Pioneers camps with 2,000 beds.

Labor collectives and individual citizens are continuing to transfer funds to bank account No 700,412. The workers of the "Elektropribor" plant in Khmelnitskiy Oblast have transferred R100,000; the collective of the "Kristall" production association in Kiev, R126,000; and the workers of the Kherson cotton combine, R175,000. The workers and employees of the "Elektron" production associations in Lvov have allocated R350,000 for the Armenian brothers.

The large collective of the M.V. Frunze machine-building scientific and production association in Sumy is trying to do its utmost to help the fraternal Armenian people. On 10 December the machine builders organized a Saturday action. The proceeds will be paid to the aid fund. The workers of the association's subsidiary farm have given the earthquake victims 5 metric tons of meat. The association's specialists—winners of the 1988 USSR state prize for science and technology—have resolved to pay the prize cash award to the victims' fund.

Art figures and men of letters, and members of the creative societies and organizations were among the first to respond to the disaster that struck the fraternal people. At their meetings, journalists, writers, painters, and musicians associated in creative unions unanimously resolved to transfer to the victims' fund R50,000 from each society, fees for newspaper and journal issues, and the proceeds from 1 day's sales.

The Ukrainian Society for the Protection of Historical and Cultural Monuments paid R100,000 to the Charity Fund, and the republic's state committee for publishing houses, printing plants, and the book trade, R25,000. Apart from this, the collectives of publishing houses, printing plants, and bookselling enterprises have allocated from their funds additional sums for the earthquake victims. Thus the "Dnipro" publishing house has already paid R100,000, the "Radyanskyy Pysmennyk" publishing house, R20,000, and the "Reklama" publishing house, R10,000; R15,000 has been paid to the Charity Fund by the Ukrainian Unions of Cinematographers and Theater Figures.

Many theater collectives, philharmonic societies, and individual performers have decided to allocate their dues to the Armenian brothers. Thus the collective of the Ivan Franko Ukrainian Academic Drama Theater in Kiev is to stage a play on its day off, and to pay the proceeds from it, R2,000, to the aid fund for Armenia's working people.

Contributions to the victims fund are also being made by scientists, as well as by party, administrative, trade union, and Komsomol functionaries. They have decided to offer the Armenian working people 1 or 2 day's worth of their earnings.

As early as on 9 December, R34,000 was paid by the inhabitants of Crimean Oblast, and R10,000 by the inhabitants of Kherson Oblast. Vera Petrovna Nozdracheva from Kherson paid R100, and the pensioner couple, Vladimir Konstantinovich Grishakov and Nataliya Vasilyevna Kovalchuk, paid over their monthly pensions. As early as 0815 in the morning an 80-year pensioner from Kherson paid R5, and Galina Dmitrieyevna Marinets, pensioner from Rovno Oblast, deducted R50 from her pension. Azerbaijani students at the Kiev Construction Engineering Institute are collecting funds to help the Armenian people.

Warm clothing, foodstuffs, bed linen, and school equipment are being collected everywhere. The workers of the Rozhishche "Dynamo" factory have prepared 1,000 blankets. The Rovno and the Zhitomir flax combines are preparing fabrics and bed linen for shipment to Armenia. The collective of the Kamenets Podolskiy garments factory has bought and shipped 5,000 school uniforms. The workers of the Odessa automatic assembly plant has shipped R20,000 worth of blankets, pillows, and bed linen.

The work to organize and to give aid to fraternal Armenia is continuing.

Shalayev on AUCCTU Aid

PM1612102588 Moscow TRUD in Russian 16 Dec 88 p 1

[Interview with AUCCTU Chairman S.A. Shalayev by own correspondents S. Aslanyan, V. Svirin, and S. Prokopchuk in Yerevan on 15 December: "Thinking About People. AUCCTU Chairman S.A. Shalayev Answers TRUD Correspondents' Questions"; first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] Yerevan, 15 Dec—Currently it is very hard to catch up with the leaders of party, soviet, and trade union organizations, ministries, and departments. They are constantly traveling to local areas and operational conferences, and resolving the innumerable questions that crop up every minute. A short conversation between AUCCTU Chairman S.A. Shalayev and TRUD correspondents S. Aslanyan, V. Svirin, and S. Prokopchuk was held on the AUCCTU chairman's return from Spitak, where one of the trade union headquarters for aid to earthquake victims is operating.

[Correspondents] What specific shape has trade union aid taken?

[Shalayev] The day after the tragedy, which deeply affected everyone, we outlined trade union measures to aid the victims. Along with the work organized posthaste by the leadership of the country and the republic to rescue people and help the stricken regions to survive, it was an urgent task to evacuate the population—above all, the elderly and children—and to give them material aid. The resolution of this task was tackled, among others, by the trade unions. The AUCCTU has allocated R13 million for these purposes. I should say that this is just the first step. On the whole, we think it necessary to increase aid to R100-120 million.

The Armenian Republic Trade Union Council is now receiving considerable funds from trade union and labor collective councils and committees, and this clearly reflects the character of the Soviet people, their readiness to share other people's troubles—no, not other people's, our own—and to lend a hand when friends and brothers are in trouble.

This readiness can also be discerned in the invitations to share homes and food that have come in from all parts of the country. I would like to recall that the AUCCTU has allocated 50,000 places in sanatoriums, boarding houses, leisure centers, tourist centers, and hotels to house the earthquake victims. Trade union sanatoriums in Armenia have taken in more than 5,000 people. The buses, planes, and trains formed in Leninakan, Kirovakan, and Yerevan have already evacuated more than 16,500 homeless people to Georgia and Krasnodar Kray. Their trips have been paid for out of trade union funds, as has their enforced stay far from their demolished homes, right up to the time they return to their rebuilt cities and villages.

I have mentioned a few names, and they will shortly be joined by sanatoriums in the Ukraine, Moldavia, and the Stavropol area, and I wonder what will be said by those spreading malicious rumors claiming that Armenian mothers and children are being shipped off to Siberia and parted forever from the land of their fathers? How monstrous such fabrications are in response to sincere and selfless concern!

I would add that labor collectives in the light and textile industries are ready to take another 8,000 people into their sanatoriums, to give them work, and to surround them with attention. Similar proposals are being received from many enterprises in other sectors.

And people who have lost not only their homes but their jobs are responding readily to this sincere impulse by accepting the helping hand.

That is the position today. But initially it was very hard to persuade people to leave. They had just seen their city reduced to ruins and their relatives and friends buried. What had happened to them? This thought gave them no peace and prevented them from leaving the ruined walls. Some have been lucky enough to see their loved ones come out alive, others have buried their relatives; the time has come to think about the future. More and more people are approaching the trade union evacuation aid centers in Leninakan, Spitak, Kirovakan, and Yerevan. With the help of local organs of power we have already helped to evacuate 34,000 people. More than 7,000 victims a day are being evacuated from Leninakan alone. Similar centers are now being set up in rural areas. But it should be stated bluntly that this has been late in happening: The rayon committees of the Agro-Industrial Complex Workers Union have quite simply wasted time. Although we initially devoted all our attention to the townspeople we became convinced of the need of opening such centers just by seeing the scale of the destruction in rural areas with our own eyes.

[Correspondents] What other tasks are the trade unions facing in the work to help the victims?

[Shalayev] Aid is flooding into Armenia—equipment, food, warm clothing, all the things that people desperately need. And if the confusion immediately following the tragedy can be understood, now that the shock has passed mismanagement and disorganization are impermissible. On instructions from the CPSU Central Committee Politburo commission coordinating work to eliminate the consequences of the natural disaster and aid the victims, representatives of the AUCCTU and the republic trade union council have been taking part in organizing the reception, registration, and distribution of incoming freight. At our suggestion representatives of social organizations such as the trade unions, the Komsomol, the Committee of Soviet Women, the Children's Fund, and the Red Cross will closely monitor the situation to ensure that these goods all reach their destinations and do not fall into dishonest hands—unfortunately, there were cases of this in the first few days.

It is an important task for trade unions to ensure that lessons are immediately organized at sanatoriums where parents and children have been evacuated. Here's a bit of good news: The first lessons at the Arzni 2 Sanatorium yesterday were attended by 84 students, and a kindergarten has been opened.

Then suddenly there was another provocative rumor to the effect that our children, once evacuated out of the republic, will be forcibly taught only in Russian. This is a lie! The republic's state committee for public education will send Armenian teachers to all sanatoriums, and some of the victims may also be teachers. They will be given jobs in line with their specialisms. Our concern is to ensure that teaching is organized for the children forthwith.

...Meeting with many inhabitants of Armenia's stricken cities and villages, one cannot fail to be struck by the courage of these people who have but one thought—to resurrect their native land and heal the terrible spiritual wounds. We heard words of sincere gratitude to the leaders of our party and government and to all Soviet people and foreign countries for the help being given to the victims. Each such meeting leaves a profound impression and strengthens our desire to do everything possible and impossible to ease their lot and restore life to the cities and villages affected by the disaster. May their tears soon be wiped away! [Shalayev ends]

Even though our talk was brief it was constantly interrupted—there was too much work that could not be postponed. We had by no means asked all our questions, and we asked the AUCCTU chairman to find time for TRUD readers once again.

[Shalayev] Agreed. And may I take this opportunity through your newspaper to express sincere gratitude to all labor collectives, trade union organizations, and all Soviet people for their selfless help, support, and fraternal solidarity with the Armenian people during their difficult ordeal.

International Aid, Condolences Continue

Gerasimov on Relief Effort

LD1512150088 Moscow TASS in English 1449 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 15 TASS—Relief aid from 67 countries has come to Armenia's quake-stricken districts as of today, Gennadiy Gerasimov, chief of the Information Directorate of the USSR Foreign Ministry, told a briefing here today.

He said as many as 1,918 foreign specialists work in Armenia now. 107 planes arrived from 33 countries. Soviet aviation organized 60 charter flights to carry relief cargoes from abroad. 50 planes of Aeroflot also carry the cargoes of relief aid.

Gennadiy Gerasimov said that though a cold weather had set in and considerable time had passed since the quake struck, there was still hope to rescue survivors trapped by debris and the search for them continued. The Foreign Ministry spokesman expressed gratitude to the heads of fire services of many countries who offered their assistance. All the pockets of fire in the quake-stricken areas of Armenia have been eliminated. The firefighters in the area are capable of controlling the situation, Gerasimov said.

"All the union republics render vast assistance to Armenia", Gerasimov said. Then Indrek Toome, chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic, took the floor. He told reporters that Estonia's work collectives and citizens showed sincere wish and readiness to give relief to victims of the quake in Armenia. Estonia's enterprises, organizations and residents donated 4.5 million roubles for the purpose. Trains and planes loaded with equipment, building materials, medicines, clothing, food and other necessities leave Estonia for Armenia every day.

As many as 230 specialists and medics went to Armenia to participate in the relief effort, Indrek Toome said. 34 units of machinery and mechanisms, various cargoes with a total weight of over 250 tons were shipped to Armenia. A group of designers left for Spitak to survey the locality and collect information for the laying out and construction of the town. Estonian builders expressed the wish to participate in housing construction and the construction of amenities in Spitak and the rural areas from 1989.

Institutions of the Estonian health services have been prepared to take in the injured. Pre-school institutions and Young Pioneer camps have been readied to receive Armenian children. A subbotnik will be held in Estonia on December 17. Proceeds from it will be contributed to the fund of relief to the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic. "Every resident of our republic sympathises with the Armenian people whom a terrible misfortune has befallen", Indrek Toome said.

Red Cross Report on Aid

LD1112220088 Moscow TASS in English 2113 GMT 11 Dec 88

[Text] Geneva December 12 TASS—Twenty three countries have responded to the call to help the earthquake-devastated areas in Soviet Armenia and have collected some 30 million Swiss francs in aid to the victims.

A report issued by the Geneva-based league of the Red Cross and Red Crescent societies here on Sunday said that the figure is growing every hour as new information is being received at the league's headquarters.

According to the league, twenty planes from 16 countries have flown to Soviet Armenia since Friday, bringing medicines and other relief supplies.

New flights are scheduled for next week.

UN Relief Coordinator Comments

LD1212205488 Moscow TASS in English 2011 GMT 12 Dec 88

[Text] Geneva December 12 TASS—An emergency meeting was convened at the Palace of Nations here today at the initiative of the office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO) to exchange opinions on how to coordinate the activities of the United Nations, its specialised agencies, non-governmental organizations and donor countries in providing urgent relief to the population of Soviet Armenia hit by the worst earthquake in the history of that republic.

Addressing the meeting, the U.N. disaster relief coordinator Muhamed Essaafi informed the participants about what the United Nations, and UNDRO in particular, are doing to provide relief to the earthquake victims in the areas of Armenia hit by the natural disaster. He pointed out that the work is pursued in close cooperation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), the League of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. On the basis of information obtained from the disaster areas, the office prepared a list of what is now absolutely indispensable for saving people. There is also the need to make available to the rescue workers powerful cranes and specialised equipment for cleaning the debris of buildings. Muhamed Essaafi specifically stressed that now UNDRO wished to receive as early as possible accurate information from the earthquake-hit areas in order to pursue further efforts to coordinate international solidarity. He said that UNDRO was in permanent contact with the U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar and the Soviet Government.

World Contributions Reviewed

LD1212175788 Moscow TASS in English 1712 GMT 12 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 12 TASS—A campaign of relief for the Armenian people affected by the devastating earthquake continues all over the world. TASS correspondents report from dozens of countries in various continents that shipments of cargoes are sent and specialists of different kind leave for Armenia.

Thus 106 Cuban medics and nurses took a flight from Havana on Sunday. They were seen off by Fidel Castro, first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, president of the Council of State and chairman of the Council of Ministers of Cuba. The Cuban leader made an entry in the book of condolences at the USSR Embassy in Havana.

Sympathy and feelings of solidarity in connection with the natural calamity that affected the Soviet people were expressed by the Communist Party of Austria and the Italian Communist Party, by the World Peace Council, President of Woman's International Democratic Federation Freda Brown, acting secretary general of the Organization of African Unity Brounison Dede, President of the Philippines Corazon Aquino, Iran's Prime Minister Mir Hoseyn Musavi, deputies of the Iranian Majlis (parliament), Austria's Vice Chancellor and Foreign Minister Alois Mock.

President of the United States Ronald Reagan and his wife Nancy Reagan visited the USSR Embassy in the United States on Sunday and made an entry in the book of condolences. The president told the NBC television network that the U.S. Administration is constantly in touch with the Soviet side to establish the needs of quake-stricken districts.

A fund-raising campaign for relief of victims of the quake is conducted by dozens of organizations across the USA. One of such organizations, the Armenian Assembly of America, has already raised a sum of over two million dollars for relief and chartered three planes to ship cargoes to the Soviet Union. Five planes with cargoes have already arrived in the USSR from the USA. The U.S. mass media emphasizes that never since the times of the Second World War has there been such a striving in the USA to help the Soviet Union. This is viewed as a real manifestation of the changed character of relations between the two countries.

One million dollars was allocated by Nigeria toward relief to Armenia, 500,000 dollars by Australia, 100,000 dollars by Indonesia, one million francs by the Parisian municipal authorities. A plane with 120 rescuers and medics and 17 tons of cargoes on board took off from Marseilles for the Armenian capital today. The National Committee of Solidarity with Victims of Quake in Armenia was formed in Greece. Vast work is conducted along the United Nations lines. A campaign of solidarity with the Armenian people and with the entire Soviet people is widening in socialist countries.

Medicines, clothing and food will be sent to Armenia on the Egyptian Government's decision. Another special cargo for those affected by the quake was already shipped from Cairo to the USSR.

Two flights with teams of doctors and rescuers with sniffer dogs, medical equipment, a field hospital, medicines, tents, autonomous power sources were sent to Yerevan from Israel.

Workers in the arts joined vigorously in the efforts of governments, public organizations and charities. Theatrical companies, world famous musicians, artists, writers hold charities soires, give concerts, performances and exhibitions whose proceeds are donated to the fund of relief to quake victims. "The anguish of the Armenian people is shared by all people on earth", said famous French singer of Armenian background, Charles Aznavour. He made a call for sapped up assistance to the quake victims.

SFRY, U.S. Contribute

LD1112174488 Moscow TASS in English 1530 GMT 11 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow June [as received] 11 TASS—TASS correspondents report:

Condolences on the earthquake in Armenia and aid to its victims continue flowing in from everywhere to this Soviet republic.

Yugoslavia sent a special plane to Armenia on Saturday which brought medicines and medical equipment, including blood transfusion equipment, to the stricken areas. The Yugoslavian Government said it would grant five billion dinars in emergency aid to the Armenian people.

Panama's President Manuel Solis Palma sent a message to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in which he expressed the condolences of the Panamanian people on the tragic earthquake in Armenia.

A day of mourning for the victims of the Armenian natural disaster was declared in San Francisco on Saturday. The city Mayor Art Agnos visited the USSR general consulate and expressed sympathy to the Soviet people on behalf of California residents.

American businessman and public figure Armand Hammer flew to Armenia on board his private plane which took off from the Los Angeles international airport on Saturday. It carried medicines, three "artificial kidney" apparatus and a million dollar bill to help the victims.

Special aid centers have been set up in California which has the largest Armenian community in the United States. They work twenty four hours a day and have already raised over a million dollars in private donations in the past two days. Medicines, bandage materials, tents, blankets and food are ready for dispatch.

The natural disaster in Armenia shocked the Danish people too. Poul Jul Anderson, a spokesman for the Danish Red Cross Committee, said Denmark was ready to render aid to the Armenian people. Since many Danes wish to donate their money, a special bank account has been opened for this purpose. The first consignment of antibiotics and medical instruments is to be dispatched from Copenhagen on Sunday afternoon.

The Algerian Government has decided to help the Soviet Union overcome the consequences of the earthquake in Armenia. Three transport planes, carrying 33 rescuers and doctors, as well as medicines, blankets and tents, flew to Yerevan on Sunday.

Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati has sent a message of condolences on the tragic consequences of the earthquake in Armenia to his Soviet counterpart Eduard Shevardnadze, the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC NEWS AGENCY (IRNA) said.

Austria, Laos Send Assistance

LD1112212088 Moscow TASS in English 1813 GMT 11 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 11 TASS—TASS correspondents report:

The Austrian Red Cross Society has sent to Armenia 20,000 ampoules with blood plasma. The Caritas charity organization sent there over 500,000 shillings worth of medical supplies, Austria-Paket donated one million shillings and organized the production of packing materials for medicaments, blankets and sleeping bags.

The Austrian organization "SOS—International Children's Villages" expressed readiness to build in Armenia houses kindergartens and schools for children orphaned by the earthquake. The firm Rozen suggested to the Soviet Embassy that it should send to the distress area at its expense a plant for the production of pre-assembly cottages. A senior executive of Adidas-Austria expressed readiness to send to Armenia 1,000 suits of clothes. Kraus prepared 5,500 jackets to be sent to Armenia.

The Socialist Union of the Slovakian Youth announced the creation of a solidarity fund for rendering assistance to the Armenian people. Money started coming there from numerous youth organizations. The fund will supplement a special bank acount opened by the National Front of Czechoslovakia. The Ministry of Public Health of Slovakia is sending to Armenia medical supplies and equipment.

A party and government delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic led by Phoune Sipaseuth, member of the Politbureau of the Central Committee of the People's Revolutionary Party of Laos, deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers and foreign minister of Laos, visited today the Soviet Embassy in Laos and expressed profound sympathy in connection with the natural calamity in Armenia.

The Armenian community of Sao Paulo began to raise money to be sent to Armenia. A relief aid campaign of Brazilian Armenians was joined by Armenian communities in Argentina and Uruguay.

On the instruction of 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the Yemen Arab Republic, 'Abd al-Karim al-'Iryani, deputy prime minister and foreign minister of the Republic, visited the Soviet Embassy in Sana and on behalf of the leaders, the government and the people of North Yemen expressed condolences to the Soviet people.

A military transport plane flew from the Jordanian capital to Soviet Armenia today on the order of King Husayn. It carried medicaments and medical equipment for those affected by the earthquake.

PRC Aid Arrives in Moscow

LD1512200688 Moscow TASS in English 1956 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 15 TASS—The first batch of emergency supplies from the PRC for people who suffered from the devastating earthquake in Armenia was delivered to Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport today. These are mainly foodstuffs. The second batch of supplies consisting of prime necessaries such as woollen clothes for adults and children, and thermoses will be flown in on December 17.

The Chinese peopled express profound sympathy in conjunction with the grave natural disaster—the earthquake in Armenia. Yu Hongliang, ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China to the USSR, told journalists during the hand over of the supplies to representatives of the Soviet Red Cross Society.

The Chinese and Soviet people have a long-standing tradition of friendly support of each other in hard times, the ambassador went on. We remember Soviet aid in dealing with the effects of calamities of nature in China. Naturally, now that tragic events occurred in Armenia, the Chinese people extends a helping hand.

I wish that the Armenian people restore with the assistance of all peoples of the Soviet Union and other nations of the world their houses and cities, and return to normal life.

Israeli Rescue Workers Arrive

LD1412125388 Moscow TASS in English 1157 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 14 TASS—The first group of Israeli rescuers is already working in Armenian areas devasted by an earthquake. The representative of an Israeli consular group staying in Moscow now told TASS that rescuers had arrived in Armenia from Tel Aviv by an Air Force plane on December 10. The group led by Brigadier General Rafael Vardi, commander of the Israeli Civil Defence Forces, consists of 40 people, including medics. They brought various equipment and materials.

According to the consular group representative, in the next few days Israel will dispatch to Armenia another two military transport planes with two more groups of medics and four tonnes of medical equipment.

UK Aid, Libyan Condolences

LD1112205988 Moscow TASS in English 2034 GMT 11 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 11 TASS—TASS correspondents report:

Britain has established an "air link" with earthquake-stricken Soviet Armenia. Three or four transport aircraft, apart from regular flights, take off from British airports every day. They carry medicines, medical and rescue equipment, as well as food, necessary for saving the quake victims.

A transport plane with several tons of blood plasma flew to Yerevan from the London airport Gatwick on Sunday. The plane has been chartered by prominent British publisher Robert Maxwell. He regards it as his personal contribution to the campaign of help to Soviet Armenia currently under way in Britain.

A second chartered plane with medical and food supplies will fly to the Soviet Union one of these days.

One of the British leading pharmaceutical companies Glaxo has decided to dispatch a large consignment of antibiotics to Armenia. The company's spokesman said that the medicines would be delivered in the next few days.

The helicopters company has offered to send several helicopters and equipment to the stricken areas to clear the rubble. Other British firms are ready to dispatch 200 sets of medical instruments, 60 reanimation plants, including ten portable plants for children, as well as other medical supplies and equipment.

About a thousand aid centers have been set up throughout Britain to collect medicines, food and clothes for the victims. In London alone, several major organisations are raising funds for this purpose. More than 500,000 pound sterlings have been put on special bank accounts in the past few days in addition to five million pound sterlings earmarked by the British Government shortly after the scale of the disaster became known.

Soviet representatives from a special working group set up to coordinate aid to the Armenian victims told today's news conference at the Soviet Embassy in London about the warm and human support of the British people to Soviet Armenia. They thanked them and the British Government for this help.

Ibrahim Buhizam, assistant secretary general of the General People's Congress of Libya, visited the Soviet Embassy in Libya on Sunday and made an entry in the condolences' book.

Deputies of the Pakistani National Assembly observed a minute of silence in memory of the victims of the destructive earthquake. A statement issued by the deputies said that they shared the grief of the Soviet people over the disaster which had hit the Armenian land.

Messages of Sympathy Arrive

LD0912192588 Moscow TASS in English 1847 GMT 9 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 9 TASS—By TASS correspondents:

Messages of sympathy and condolences in connection with the disastrous earthquake in Soviet Armenia, vast destructions and loss of life are coming in from many countries of the world.

A message of condolences has been sent to General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet Mikhail Gorbachev and Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR Nikolay Ryzhkov by President of the Republic of Afghanistan, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan Najibullah and Prime Minister of Afghanistan Muhammad Hasan Sharq. It says:

We have learnt with deep sorrow about the tragedy, caused by a terrible earthquake in Armenia, which entailed huge loss of life and a great material damage. On behalf of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, the Afghan Government and the people, we want to express the sentiments of sincere condolences to you and through you—to the CPSU Central Committee. The USSR Supreme Soviet, the government and the people of the Soviet Union, and particularly to the families of the victims.

President of Nicaragua Daniel Ortega has offered condolences to the Soviet people in connection with the tragic consequences of the earthquake in Armenia. Solidarity with the families of the earthquake victims, the Soviet people as a whole is expressed in the document on behalf of the national leadership of the Sandinist National Liberation Front and the Government of Nicaragua.

A message of condolences has been sent to the Soviet Solidarity Committee and all earthquake-hit families by the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization (AAPSO).

First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers Party, President of the Council of State of the Polish People's Republic Wojciech Jaruzelski, and member of the Political Bureau of the party Central Committee, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Polish People's Republic Mieczyslaw Rakowski have sent Mikhail Gorbachev and Nikolay Ryzhkov a message, offering condolences over the tragic earthquake in Armenia.

On behalf of the deeply shaken population of Poland and the leadership of the Polish People's Republic they conveyed the sentiments of grief and sympathy to the CPSU Central Committee, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and the Council of Ministers of the USSR, the fraternal peoples of the Soviet Union. The message offers the most sincere condolences to the families which suffered from the consequences of the natural calamity and also the leadership of Armenia.

The Danish news agency RITZAUS BUREAU reports that messages of condolences in connection with the earthquake in Armenia have been sent to the Soviet leadership by Crown Prince Frederic, Prime Minister of Denmark Poul Schluter, and Foreign Minister of Denmark Uffe Elleman-Jensen.

The tragic events in Armenia have given rise to profound sympathy in Britain. In a message to Mikhail Gorbachev, Queen of Britain Elizabeth the Second stated that she had been grieved to learn of a catastrophic earthquake in Armenia and numerous sufferings and loss of life. The queen and Prince Philip have offered most cordial condolences to the Soviet leader and all people affected by the tragedy.

In an interview to the BBC radio corporation Christopher Patten, minister of state, foreign and commonwealth office (overseas development) has said that Britain wants to give prompt and considerable assistance to help eliminate the earthquake consequences. He underlined that the government maintains a close contact with the Soviet authorities.

I have learnt with profound sorrow about the catastrophe which hit the Soviet Union, says a message to Mikhail Gorbachev from General Secretary of the French Communist Party Georges Marchais. At this tragic moment I offer your party, the people of Armenia and all peoples of the Soviet Union fraternal sentiments of solidarity of the French Communists. We shall take every measure to organize relief to the victims.

Australia's Prime Minister Robert Hawke said that the earthquake in Armenia was "a great tragedy". Answering questions from journalists here today he said he had sent Mikhail Gorbachev a message expressing sympathy of the Australian Government and the people and the readiness to give assistance, if required.

A message of condolences was sent to Mikhail Gorbachev by King Hassan the Second of Morocco. The message offers the most sincere condolences to the Soviet people on behalf of the king of the Moroccan people who "feel profound grief and sorrow over the catastrophe".

A message of condolences in connection with the disastrous earthquake in Armenia has been sent to the CPSU Central Committee by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Greece. "We have learnt with profound sorrow about human casualties and material destructions inflicted by an earthquake in Armenia", the message says. Its text was printed in the newspaper RIZOSPASTIS today.

Deputy Minister Interviewed on Foreign Aid

PM1612101588 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 16 Dec 88 Morning Edition p 2

[Interview with USSR Deputy Foreign Minister V. Nikiforov by IZVESTIYA correspondent G. Alimov: "An Exception to the Rules or a Norm of Our Time? Interview at the USSR Foreign Ministry Operations Staff"; place, date not given; first paragraph is an introduction]

[Text] Many people were totally surprised by the Soviet Union's unprecedented decision to accept aid from abroad in connection with the earthquake in Armenia. But could a different decision have been made? Is this just an exception to the rules we have followed for such a long time? IZVESTIYA's correspondent interviewed USSR Deputy Foreign Minister V. Nikiforov.

[Nikiforov] The very fact that such a decision was made is a highly remarkable phenomenon. This is not just an action dictated by exceptional circumstances. It was a natural step for us in light of the policy of new thinking which we have proclaimed.

[Alimov] At what level was this issue decided?

[Nikiforov] When the offer from the French came in, we in the Foreign Ministry decided it would be expedient to accept it. Our decision was immediately backed at government level. We urgently notified the French Government of our consent to the immediate dispatch of their rescue teams. And we are extremely grateful to them for this initiative. The socialist countries were among the first to offer a brotherly helping hand. Later on we received so many offers that a special staff was set up for the first time in the Foreign Ministry for such a purpose. Today it coordinates all this work.

[Alimov] Your opinion, please: How much time would it have taken to make a decision on foreign aid, say, 10-15 years ago?

[Nikiforov] A long time. Probably days, and maybe even a week. It is more than likely that the question would not have even arisen. But on this occasion the decision took literally a few hours.

[Alimov] How many countries offered us aid? How many foreign specialists are in Armenia at present?

[Nikiforov] As of 15 December, the victims received aid from 67 countries and UNESCO. Some 1,900 specialist are now working in Armenia. More than 100 special flights have arrived from abroad.

[Alimov] A lot of aid is coming in. According to some estimates, including the cost of equipment, medical instruments, materials, and so on, it amounts to about $100 million. Much is being said and written in the West to the effect that not everything is reaching the victims....

[Nikiforov] Unfortunately, there is a lot of speculation on this account. Hints are being dropped that equipment is being shunted somewhere aside. But people tend to forget: We ourselves are extremely interested in ensuring that everything, right down to the last cent and the last kopeck, reaches the victims. Of course, by no means everything in aid distribution is properly organized. Breakdowns do occur. For example, specialists have already arrived in Spitak, but their equipment and machinery are held up in Yerevan airport and cannot be traced. Things like that do happen in the confusion. It is possible that incidents like this give grounds for certain conclusions. A special commission for the distribution of foreign aid has now been set up in Yerevan. It comprises representatives of the Foreign Ministry and international organizations, as well as representatives of the public.

[Alimov] Have there been any instances of turning down the arrival of specialists in our country or refusing aid for any political reasons?

[Nikiforov] There have been no such instances. Nor will there be any. True enough, now we are telling people that we have all the medical personnel we need and that there is no need to send firefighters. There are very many offers; everybody is willing to help. But we are telling them: First and foremost we need such and such, or such and such.

[Alimov] Are these explanations accepted with understanding?

[Nikiforov] Yes, of course. The Austrians, for example, have now offered to build as a gift a plant for the production of prefabricated homes. The first homes will come off the conveyor belt by January. The Austrians will build this plant by themselves, using their own resources. A similar offer has also been received from the Italians: They have offered a mobile plant for the production of homes. Once a village has been rebuilt, for example, the plant moves on elsewhere. Of course, we accept such offers with gratitude.

[Alimov] Madame Aenne Burda donated DM1 million to the victims fund. Is it possible, for example, to use this money to build an orphanage?

[Nikiforov] If she so wishes, I think it would be possible. All funds will be utilized only for the express purpose for which they were donated.

[Alimov] We have learned that aid for the victims is also coming in from Soviet collectives abroad, is that right?

[Nikiforov] Indeed, Soviet institutions abroad are collecting money, buying medicines and equipment, and resolving to remit to the victims fund in the USSR a day's earnings by their staffers in foreign currency. There are many such instances. Also here, in the Foreign Ministry apparatus, diplomats decided to pay into a special account a day's or even 3 days' earnings. Nobody wants not to be involved.

[Alimov] What would you like to say to all who have arrived recently to help Armenia?

[Nikiforov] I would like to express tremendous gratitude for the aid, support, and charity.

Armenian Minister Thanks Armenians Abroad

NC1512105088 Moscow in Persian to Iran 1500 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Message from Anatoliy Mkrtchyan, Armenian SSR minister of foreign affairs, to Armenians abroad—recorded in Armenian followed by Persian translation]

[Text] Dear compatriots: I know your hearts are filled with sympathy over the tragedy in Armenia. This tragedy has truly moved all Armenians. We feel that you are with us in these difficult moments. I know that with joint efforts we will be able to overcome this tragedy and save from death the wounded and sick who have been affected by the destructive earthquake. We will restore and reconstruct the cities of our homeland. This is our duty. I would like to seize this opportunity to thank all those who have sent cables and letters expressing their sympathies and condolences to us.

'No Interest' Shown in Quake Warning System

PM1512144388 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 15 Dec 88 Morning Edition p 5

[Report on interview with French volcanologist Haroun Tazieff in Paris by own correspondent Yu. Kovalenko in Paris: "Haroun Tazieff: 'Lessons Must Be Learned From the Tragedy'"; date not given]

[Excerpts] Powerful earthquakes on our planet will continue to occur in the future. But not enough attention is devoted to the problems of predicting them: In the overwhelming majority of countries homes and buildings are not built to withstand seismic activity, and rescue operations are organized extremely poorly in all states.

These are the worrying conclusions reached by a well-known French volcanologist, which he shared in a conversation with your correspondent.

"Mankind," he believes, "must learn from the terrible tragedy in Armenia: First and foremost, the norms of seismological construction must be observed. In addition to this, rescue operation work must be reorganized on a war footing, otherwise it will remain ineffectual. And finally," Haroun Tazieff believes, "the VAN [expansion unknown] earthquake warning system, developed several years ago by three Greek scientists, must be established everywhere. It is based on monitoring sudden changes in the electromagnetic waves circulating in the earth's crust, which precede an earthquake. The monitoring of electromagnetic signals with the aid of sensors," the volcanologist claims, "and their mathematical interpretation make it possible to foresee seismic catastrophes."

[Kovalenko] Why do you believe the VAN system is capable of predicting earthquakes?

[Tazieff] It has already proved its effectiveness in Greece, and I see no reason the VAN system could not be used in the Alps or the Caucasus. [Tazieff ends]

Haroun Tazieff's struggle of many years to see the VAN system established in France has finally been crowned with its first success. Work to create such a system will begin in 1989 in the Alpine department of Isere. Five monitoring stations will be built in the Alps. The total cost of the project is 2 million francs. A decision has also been taken to experiment with the VAN system in China.

The volcanologist told me that during a visit to Moscow in October last year, as part of the "Initiative-87" delegation, which was received by M.S. Gorbachev, he discussed the VAN system with Soviet scientists but, according to him, they showed no interest. True, he admitted that our specialists working with radio frequencies have their own very interesting approach to solving the problem of earthquake prediction, but this has yet to be tested in practice. [passage omitted] [Kovalenko concludes]

French specialists and journalists who have visited the scene of the disaster give our rescue teams due credit for selflessness and point out that the authorities are doing everything in their power, but that the struggle to save lives must be conducted in incredibly difficult conditions.

Memorial Service Held for SFRY Crew

LD1512134388 Moscow TASS in English 1244 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 15 TASS—A service in memory of the crew of the Yugoslav military transport plane that crashed near Yerevan on December 12 was held at Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport on Thursday [15 December]. The Yugoslav pilots had hurried to the rescue of victims of the Armenian earthquake, fulfilling their internationalist duty. Their plane carried medicines, food, tents, rescue equipment and equipment for cutting reinforcing bars and concrete slabs.

Representatives of the USSR Defence Ministry, the Main Political Department of the Soviet Army and Navy, the Soviet Foreign Ministry and the Permanent Mission of the Armenian Council of Ministers at the USSR Council of Ministers, as well as servicemen of the Moscow Garrison and ordinary members of the public came to pay their last respects to the memory of the Yugoslav pilots. After the service their bodies were flown to Belgrade.

Posner Discusses Strife, Political Aftershocks

PM1312150388 London BBC Television Network in English 2230 GMT 12 Dec 88

[Interview with Soviet commentator Vladimir Posner in London by news presenter Donald MacCormick, monitored in progress in the framework of the BBC 2 "Newsnight" program, following a report on Gorbachev's comments on the effect of the earthquake disaster on the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict; no date given—recorded]

[Text] [MacCormick] Well, Vladimir Posner, if a terrible natural disaster of that kind cannot stop, or at least interrupt, the feud between Armenians and Azerbaijanis, what on earth can?

[Posner] Well, I think it can. What we're seeing is nationalism at its worst, and there's nothing worse than chauvinism. And it just shows what a crazy, insane thing it is, and how much hatred there has to be in a situation like that, for people not to help each other. But I don't think it's stopping the relief effort. And I think, tragic as this may sound, that this, the earthquake, will bring the two republics closer together ultimately.

[MacCormick] How can the circle be squared in the end, the apparent circle that Mr Gorbachev wants to square between giving a lot of devolved power to these republics—and also to the ones up in the northwest around the Baltic—without preventing the Soviet Union from gradually splitting up?

[Posner] Well, I think clearly that the Soviet Union will be strong by virtue of having strong republics. I think every republic should have its own character, a greater degree of independence, especially economic independence, and function as one organism. Of course, if the liver starts saying to the heart that it's not going to function accordingly, then the body goes to pieces. It surely is a delicate balance. But I feel it can be found, and indeed, must be found, and then you will have a strong country. When you have a country made up of republics that are really not doing their thing, then I think the country loses much.

[MacCormick] And how is the particular problem—this feud in the south—going to be resolved?

[Posner] Well, you're asking me the "$64,000 Question." I really can't answer it. I don't think anyone knows the answer except through education, and as I say, perhaps this tragedy will show people that the feuding over a certain territory is really secondary to the interests of both republics.

[MacCormick] What do you make of [BBC correspondent] Martin Sixsmith's remark [in "Newsnight" report on Armenian earthquake aftermath] that the whole willingness of the Soviet Union to admit it's in terrible trouble and to have aid in from the West is a symptom of the new climate which Mr Gorbachev has tried to introduce?

[Posner] Well, that's absolutely true. I mean, in the past it was not uncommon for the Soviet Union not to acknowledge aid or not to accept aid from the West—and I'm talking about the rather distant past now—because it was coming from bourgeois, imperialist, what have we, sources. And I think that the fact that [as heard] we're not just acknowledging it, but being very deeply grateful. And I would be remiss if I did not say on my own part how deeply I feel about what has been done in Great Britain, all the people who've helped—the Soviet Embassy is literally bursting with blankets and gifts and money coming in from all over this country. And this is something that is moving all of us profoundly, and it certainly is a sign of glasnost that we can say this.

[MacCormick] Is there any danger that Mr Gorbachev might be deflected from glasnost and from his task of ending the Cold War, in which he was so recently engaged in New York, deflected from all that by his internal troubles?

[Posner] I don't think so at all. First of all, I don't think you can separate foreign policy from internal policy. I was reading an article, I believe in the ECONOMIST, today, where they speak of "Mr Gorbachev West" and "Mr Gorbachev East" as if this were two different people with two different sets of problems. That's not true. It is all one equation. And one affects the other. And I think that success in foreign policy rubs off on internal policy. And problems internally rub off on foreign policy. It's one equation.

[MacCormick] Mr Gorbachev surprised everyone, really, in New York recently when he offered to make these big troop reductions and armament reductions. Will there be more surprises as he continues the offensive? What's his next gambit going to be?

[Posner] I really wouldn't call this an offensive.

[MacCormick] A peace offensive.

[Posner] Yes. Well, I think it's basically an understanding of what he himself said not that long ago—that there are things that are more important than so-called national interests or geopolitical interests, and they are world security, the interests of everyone on this earth. And I think that is really the reason for the unilateral cuts that he's proposed, and that we will do, regardless of what the response will be. I've heard a lot of kind of saying [as heard], "Well, yes, that's important, but that doesn't mean we're going to have equality in Europe, the Soviets still have a preponderance." And some have even belittled those cuts. Of course, I say, what if the Soviets had said they would add 500,000 men instead of taking them out? We'd hear different cries to be sure. No, I think that this will continue.

[MacCormick] Vladimir Posner, thank you very much indeed.

Stiffer Penalties for Ethnic Strife Urged

PM1512152388 Moscow NEDELYA in Russian No 49 5-11 Dec 88 (Signed to Press 7 Dec 88) p 2

[Reader's letter carried as part of the "NEDELYA Mailbag" feature]

[Text] I was deeply saddened to hear that the flames of interethnic dissension have burst out again in Armenia and Azerbaijan, and this at a time coinciding with a sad anniversary: The 26 Baku commissars were executed by firing squad 70 years ago.

But is this a coincidence? Is this not essentially the work of that selfsame hand which, back in 1918, sentenced to death the commissars representing almost 10 nationalities and now, on the day when we honor their memory, has set two peoples against each other?

I am certain that nationalist slogans are just a means of creating chaos and putting the brakes on restructuring. This is to the advantage of none but those who have always, in 1918 just as in 1988, placed the interests of their own purses above all national and state interests, those who are prepared to protect their purses even by shedding the blood of their own people. Restructuring might create serious trouble for them, up to and including trouble stemming from specific articles of the Criminal Code. We have already seen this in Kazakhstan back in December 1986, when corrupt elements embarked on all sorts of provocations and pushed young people into nationalist demonstrations totally divorced from the true national interests of the Kazakh and other peoples. And now history is repeating itself elsewhere in an even more terrible fashion.

I read the heartbreaking reports of events in Azerbaijan and Armenia, and I think of how far contempt for legality and for the principles of humanism and humaneness has gone. Is it so difficult to realize that international brotherhood is the cornerstone of our union's foundation upon which our might is built? So how come people attacking the foundations of our motherland, people fighting others and fanning national dissension, are punished as if they had done no more than beat up their companions in an ordinary drunken brawl?

I believe that the fanning of national dissension is per se, regardless of consequences, ideological subversion aimed at undermining one of the most important mainstays of Soviet power, and that this must be deemed an especially grave state crime. The description of state crime must be applied to actions wrecking the work of socialist enterprises and obstructing the exercise of Soviet citizens' constitutional right to work.

Events like those in Alma-Ata, Baku, Yerevan, and Karabakh are unpredictable, and that which could still be remedied today may become irreparable tomorrow....

S. Otrozhdennov, worker, Semipalatinsk

General Argues Need for Interethnic Unity

PM0712123388 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 7 Dec 88 First Edition p 1

[Article by Hero of the Soviet Union Lieutenant General S. Nurmagambetov, deputy commander of the Central Asian Military District: "Our Common Home"]

[Excerpts] The fraternal friendship between the Soviet peoples.... Until quite recently it appeared to us firm and unbreakable. But events in the last few years and even in the last few days are causing alarm and concern among Soviet people. "What is happening?" they ask. "Where have these people come from, people who are encroaching on one of our main gains—the friendship and cohesion of the Soviet peoples?"

I am a professional military man, not a politician, but as a man who has lived through a lot and has seen a lot this question keeps worrying me. Never—and I emphasize, never—in my life have I come across anything like it.

Yes, for almost 7 decades we have been living in our common home which bears the name of the USSR. That was the will of the peoples inhabiting our multinational country.

These decades were decades of labor and struggle; they were not carefree. The dynamism inherent in the initial stage of the formation of the multinational Soviet state was substantially lost and undermined by the retreat from Lenin's principles of nationalities policy, by the breaches of legality during the personality cult period, and by the ideology and mentality of stagnation. All this was said with the utmost bluntness in the 19th All-Union CPSU Conference resolution "On Interethnic Relations."

The restructuring that is spreading throughout the country proves that the party is steering a correct course. But today the cause of restructuring needs organization, discipline, creative initiative, and the talents of every member of our multinational family.

Unfortunately, our home also houses people who, wittingly or unwittingly, fan unhealthy passions. In Estonia, for example, they essentially try to represent matters as if the other republics have absolutely nothing to do with the successes achieved by that republic's industrious people, with the greatest of assistance from the whole Soviet people. Such a presentation of the question retards restructuring and substantially affects the interests of every Soviet person. And I think that it is also unacceptable to any honest Estonian.

It was correctly said at the 22 November 1988 session of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium that some people look at the entire country and even at the whole world from their own corner, from their own "angle" of vision. We must not allow the development of a situation which would jeopardize restructuring or maybe even give some people an excuse to think: Could it be that restructuring is to blame for everything?

The mass media have also informed us about some "tub-thumper" leaders from Azerbaijan and Armenia. What can be said about them? They are simply unscrupulous sly people, parasites of restructuring, who try to pass off their personal ambitions and pretensions as the people's opinion, who fan unhealthy passions. Unfortunately, these instigators have succeeded in provoking disturbances which are dangerous for society, and blood has been shed in some Transcaucasian cities and rayons.

But people do say that every family has its black sheep. At this point, however, I do not wish to talk about or with political adventurers. What is important today for me and for every Soviet person is to hear the voice of veterans who have acquired the wisdom of life, of fathers and mothers, of all honest people who genuinely value the honor of our great country and the friendship of our peoples. Alas, hitherto many of them have been just observing events and keeping silent. In my view, however, this stance only boosts the confidence of elements with extremist leanings. They are evidently beginning to feel that people everywhere are pleased with strikes and idle enterprises, with the fact that school and VUZ classrooms and lecture halls are deserted. We have perhaps been too patient in expecting an awakening of the conscience of "leaders" who fan interethnic passions. This is why Soviet people show such approval for the measures taken to maintain public order in the "hot" spots.

The people are by no means indifferent about what is happening in the country, in any part of it. But some people would like to completely detach these events from the rest of us: Over there, they say, in the Transcaucasus, there is a struggle between nationalist groupings for their personal interests. There is no point, they say, in anyone interfering, not even the Army. At this point, however, I would take the liberty to firmly disagree. When the interests of thousands upon thousands of people are affected, and their tranquil life is disturbed, when their lives are actually in danger, it is necessary to use all means to maintain law and order. It would be a grave mistake not to do so.

There are quite a few examples of how we have succeeded in coming to one another's rescue. A devastating earthquake hit Tashkent—and all the fraternal republics sent aid to Uzbekistan. Let us recall recent events in Chernobyl—thousands of people from all corners of the country voluntarily went there to eliminate the consequences of the accident and to build housing for those forced out of their homes. Soldiers from the Soviet Armed Forces are always in the difficult sectors. They are the first to arrive to give help to those who need it.

Now the officers, ensigns, sergeants, and soldiers have been assigned the responsible mission of maintaining public order in some cities and rayons in the Transcaucasus. Ordinary people are grateful to them for the tranquility and security they provide. I am certain that the time will come when those who are stupefied by verbal wiles and are under the adventurers' thumbs will sober up and will realize the great harm done to them and to our whole people by unbridled nationalist and parochial ambitions.

Let me repeat that working people in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Estonia, and the other Baltic republics are not the only ones to experience the effect of difficulties caused by stagnation. They can also be felt in other regions of the country. There is only one way out: We all must work better and more diligently and be more energetic in making our contribution to the cause of restructuring. We will not advance if we waste time on debates and arguments instead of working. The overwhelming majority of our people do not seek any privileges at the expense of others, they do not seek a way out of difficult situations via "rally" democracy.

The country is still living in an atmosphere of intensive and orderly work even though—why make a secret of it—obstacles are created by negative processes in the aforementioned regions. After all, is there anyone who does not realize that all republics—never mind the republics, in fact—all enterprises in our country are closely interconnected. The fact that workers in Azerbaijan and Armenia are today letting their partners down as regards supplies is having a painful effect on labor collectives in Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan.... Briefly speaking, the failure to meet planned deliveries is having unpleasant consequences. How can those who continue to live in an atmosphere of national arrogance and exclusiveness fail to comprehend this? [passage omitted]

I well recall the military commissariats in wartime. Volunteers of different nationalities flocked there. And each one of them perceived the specific meaning of the word "front." Not the way some loud-mouth orators interpret it today. We marched to the front to save our great motherland, one and the same for us all, from the flames and to uphold its honor.

Today's front for every Soviet person is restructuring, the socialist renewal of our common home. We have to live in it—the worker who tends the blast furnace fires, the kolkhoz member who lives with worries about the future harvest, the scientist who is setting up his next experiment, the soldier who guards the Soviet people's gains. Our friendship is the greatest of these gains. We must treasure it and strengthen it by all possible means.

The country is entering a qualitatively new state, a new stage of restructuring. Unimaginable opportunities are emerging for the manifestation of sociopolitical activeness, enthusiasm, and talent. The decisions made by the extraordinary USSR Supreme Soviet session, leading to full power for the soviets and the creation of a socialist rule-of-law state, open up new vistas before every Soviet person.

Gen Lizichev Interviewed on Strife, Security

LD1512215588 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1830 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Interview with Colonel General Aleksey Dmitriyevich Lizichev, head of the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army and Navy, by correspondent Yakov Smirnov; date, place not given—recorded]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Smirnov] We know that in the disaster area there are special subunits of the Soviet Army. I have in mind a paratroop regiment and a flying squad situated there. We know that, unfortunately, some members of the public, who Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev has described as corrupt, are hampering work by spreading all sorts of rumors and by talking people out of being evacuated. Above all they have even thrown bricks and stones at our servicemen. And there have even been casualties among the military servicemen. Can you tell us what is being done by both the flying squad and the paratroop regiment to ensure order, and to prevent the degenerates—I cannot think of any other word to describe them—from stopping the rescue of people of their own nationality, in their own republic, and on their own land?

[Lizichev] Yes, both the squad and the regiment are there to ensure order, which must be maintained during this complex and very difficult time....

[Smirnov, interrupting] Furthermore, maintained most decisively.

[Lizichev] Undoubtedly. If organization or effective management are absent, a further disaster may result. This is why our paratroopers are there maintaining order with a firm hand.

[Smirnov] Aleksey Dmitriyevich, surely it is understandable that people who are suffering, who have lost relatives and friends, whose heart is in pain for their republic and land, surely they would not be throwing stones at those who are rescuing them. Surely, only, I do not know what word to use, only riffraff could do this.

[Lizichev] Yes, only riffraff. This riffraff will be detained, and lawful but tough measures will be applied against them, against those who wish to undermine the friendship between our peoples during a time of grief and disaster which has struck the unity of our people, who do not want to do what is needed to rescue people but who want precisely to compromise. Obviously, their main concern is to force their way to power and to undermine the unity of our peoples and the unity of the Army and the people.

[Smirnov] To preserve their mafia.

[Lizichev] Yes, to preserve their mafia. Generally, I would say that much is being done now. Well, you know that according to the decision of the USSR defense minister, about 4,000 servicemen on nonregular military service drafted from Armenia and whose families have suffered from the earthquake have been sent on leave ranging from 10 to 30 days. Those who have finished their established period of service have been discharged. The question of deferring the draft for regular military service for those in the earthquake area has been resolved.

Generally, I can say this: The servicemen of the Army and the Navy, together with the whole Soviet people, share the grief that has struck the Armenian people. They are taking part in eliminating the consequences of the earthquake and will be taking part in restoring the normal life of this region's people.

Baltic Telebridge on Republican Sovereignty

LD1212131988 Riga in Latvian to Europe 2130 GMT 7 Dec 88

[From the "Amber Coast" program]

[Text] Yesterday, hundreds of thousands of people viewed a Baltic republic telebridge on the problems concerning the sovereignty of the republics. Representatives of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia participated in the discussion. The Belorussians sent notice that they were not ready for such a discussion yet.

Latvia was represented by members of the Popular Front Council Juris Bojars, a jurist, and Janis Aboltins, deputy chairman of the State Planning Committee. In addition, representatives of the National Independence Movement of Latvia and several other nonformal organizations participated. The participants in the discussion all were of the opinion that the state can be strong only if all its components are strong. The sovereignty of the republics (?lends) such power.

Bulgarian Paper Examines Soviet Conflicts

AU0912125888 Sofia TRUD in Bulgarian 5 Dec 88 pp 1, 3

[Article by Lyuben Genov, special correspondent: "Sovereignty and Unity"]

[Text] The Soviet dailies IZVESTIYA and TRUD were informed that they would not be printed in Baku unless they publish objective reports on the events in Azerbaijan. As is known, the major Soviet dailies are printed in more than 60 towns of the country, their pages being faxed. The Soviet colleagues accepted this news with the realistic approach that I noticed about them on several occasions. Such controversies never existed before, but in talking about them, many journalists pointed out the difficult legacy of the past.

It happened that the most severe consequences of certain unresolved contradictions did not manifest themselves in economic life, or in the market, but in relations among nationalities in the USSR. They manifest themselves only today, but they are the result of the former absolute bureaucratic diktat, of the unfeeling attitude of central departments toward the national wealth and interests of the union republics, the results of unpunished corruption and personal favoritism. The contradictions further accumulated, but they were spoken and written about only in terms of the well-known cliche of "monolithic unity." The truth was slightly revealed during the celebrations on the occasion of the USSR's 60th [figure as published] anniversary.

The new situation in the Soviet Union, however, raised expectations and accumulated impatient wishes for change. Reagan, who years ago liked to use the expression "evil empire" in talking about the Soviet Union, in his latest Saturday message to the nation admitted that he could never have imagined at the beginning of his career that one day he would remember his meetings with a Soviet leader nostalgically.

The internal opposition in the Soviet Union is connected with the distortions of Stalinism and of the stagnation period. These distortions became a terrifying weapon in the hands of demagogues and extremists, who understand that democracy without law and order is unthinkable. As the current analyses show, these extremists and demagogues are utterly indifferent to the fate of national relations; they neither care for the working people's interests nor for the interests of the state. Their slogans for restructuring and justice are actually a violent defense of corruption, unlimited personal power, and opportunities of personal profit. For this reason they defend their interests at all costs—having recourse to economic diversion and even bloodshed. This actually means to discredit restructuring and to threaten its future.

On the other hand, the style of different organizations and departments is difficult to combine with the striving for changes; everyone has to learn, expand his views, and apply new methods in seeking renewal. When such processes are preceded by a period of formalistic political work with people, when policy is separated from the real human interests, when civilized manners in handling communications and controversies have not yet been consolidated under the conditions of glasnost and democratization, it can happen that even certain forces that have nothing in common with the defense of the old ways may become carried away in the chaos, and passions can flare up, provoking new distortions. Why should a newspaper not express opinions that do not coincide with those of the printing workers in Baku? What kind of democratic reasons are those that deprive 400-500,000 readers of their right to receive their newspapers on time? The chaotic resistance to diktat can easily turn into dictatorship.

Prior to and at the most recent session of the USSR Supreme Soviet, contradictions within the Estonian SSR, as well as the inconsistency of the amendments to the Constitution of this republic, were discussed in detail. In addition to the already known arguments, we should point out that these amendments were not only in contradiction with the federative system of the country, but represent a return to an outdated and distorted form of confederation, as Aleksandr Zhylin, the bourgeois Russian scholar, expressed it. If we examine worldwide experience, we will come across numerous federations, such as the United States, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Yugoslavia, the CSSR, and Australia. Their historical development did not lead from a federation to a confederation, but vice-versa. As for the Soviet Union, the process was scientifically confirmed by Lenin, when the USSR was established in 1922. The subsequent deviations and distortions in this strategy resulted in severe contradictions.

What was the decision adopted at the latest session of the Soviet parliament in this respect? Mikhail Gorbachev pointed out that the sovereignty and independence of the union republics can develop and assert themselves through economic cost accounting and self-management. Legal, state, and economic mechanisms, above all, will make it possible for each republic to establish contact and communicate with the rest of the country and the world through its enterprises and institutions at all levels. Along with optimal attention and realistic understanding for the concerns and contradictions within the republics, the reforms in the political system were implemented with the support of an overwhelming majority of Soviet people. It is natural that the concern about the clashes in the Baltic area, Azerbaijan, and Armenia should be combined with the care for settling difficulties and the enforcement of the law against all those who take advantage of democratization in order to disrupt life.

In a subsequent commentary we will deal with the stand of the workers' class and its participation in restructuring.

Muslim Leader Calls for Interethnic Unity

PM1512161388 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 15 Dec 88 p 4

[Interview with Sheykh-ul-islam Allakhshukyur Pasha-zade, "Spiritual leader of Transcaucasian Muslims," by unnamed own correspondent: "Living in Harmony"—first paragraph is editorial introduction]

[Text] The devastating natural disaster in Armenia is seen in Azerbaijan as a common misfortune. Working people, students, workers, the intelligentsia, and peasantry are all helping, donating blood and expressing their readiness to play the most active part in clearing up the aftereffects of the tragedy. Muslims in Azerbaijan grieve along with all the Soviet people. Our correspondent met the other day with Sheykh-ul-islam Allakhshukyur Pasha-zade, spiritual leader of the Transcaucasian Muslims, who asked that the following be conveyed to this newspaper's readers:

"It is the very purpose of man, whatever his nationality or religion, to live in peace and harmony, fraternally sharing all joys and sorrows. Our holy faith commands us Muslims to instill a sense of decency, high morality, goodness, and charity in peoples's hearts. Islam has always urged people to know rather than ignore one another, to love rather than hate, and to come together rather than be separate. Sympathy is an integral quality of every Muslim's soul. Our minds and hearts could therefore not fail to be moved by the doleful news of the unprecedented natural disaster in Armenia, causing destruction and many thousands of deaths.

"Our prophet said that he experienced the height of bliss when he observed devotion to virtue in people, considering it a means of establishing peace and helping and assisting the suffering. And at this sorrowful time for the Armenian people we express our deep condolence and sympathy with them.

"We have expressed the anguish and sympathy engendered in our hearts to Vazgen I, Catholicos of All Armenians, and the leadership of the Armenian Church and asked them to convey our sympathy to the families of the deceased and all victims of the awful earthquake. Services held in mosques in Azerbaijan have expressed Muslims' sorrow and sympathy regarding this tragedy.

"The noble impulse of all the peoples of our country, who, moved by a sense of sympathy, have extended a helping hand to those in misfortune, is worthy of divine blessing. Azerbaijanis were among the first to respond to their neighbor's grief. Faced with this universal tragedy the divisions between the two peoples have receded.

"The Land of the Soviets is our common home, the peoples inhabiting it are an integrated whole whose joy and pain are the same for us all. One of our faith's injunctions is that, if one member of our body ails, then the whole body suffers. And we can see that the entire Soviet people experience the pain of the Armenian people as their own, and are seeking to do everything possible by their concerted afforts to assuage it and heal the wounds inflicted.

"The decision taken by Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev, our state leader, to postpone all international affairs and return home to be alongside his people during this difficult time was met with enormous approval and gratitude by us, as by all Soviet people.

"We are particularly acutely aware today of the vitally important significance of Soviet people's unity and harmony, of that enormous spiritual force capable of resisting misfortune and doing good and noble works.

"Yes, misfortune has united people and revealed their finest qualities, qualities befitting man and citizen. We believe that the wisdom and reason so graphically demonstrated during these days, and mutual aid, will always triumph, responding as they do to the vital interests of each of the peoples inhabiting our country and the whole of Soviet society."

Karabakh Crowd Severely Wounds 5 Soldiers

LD1612064588 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 0500 GMT 16 Dec 88

[Text] The whole country is giving assistance to Armenia, which has been afflicted by a natural disaster. But there are forces which are hindering the stabilization of the situation. Here is a report from Yerevan by our correspondents Yuriy Korotkov and Vadim Kukushkin:

[Korotkov] Everyone is now helping the afflicted with whatever they can—with their hands, bread, housing, money. The CPSU Central Committee Politburo report published today in the newspapers once again testifies to what immense care the party and government are affording to those who suffered from the destructive earthquake. The main thing required now is good organization, responsibility, and unity.

[Kukushkin] But unfortunately, there are people who are attempting to destabilize the situation, by circulating various rumors and provoking clashes with servicemen. We will cite a number of specific facts from official sources, meaning that these are not unsubstantiated.

[Korotkov] A few days ago, the leaders of the Karabakh Committee, in response to the decision of the party and government on the accomodation of the victims, particularly children, in the sanatoria and boarding houses of the country, began to circulate rumors that they are being evacuated to disperse the nation. They called on the people not to leave their native soil. Incited by these slogans, people headed for the station square to hold a meeting. In their way stood troop pickets who were engaged in maintaining order. (Mkrtchyan), one of the leaders of the Karabakh Committee, called on the crowd to break through the cordon. Stones were thrown at the servicemen, and five soldiers were hospitalized with grievous wounds.

[Kukushkin] What need have people already shaken by the disaster for rumors, for example, that the earthquake is allegedly the result of an underground nuclear explosion? It is impossible, I believe, to think up anything more blasphemous. Moreover, the leaders of the Karabakh Committee have officially called upon the United Nations to send world-renowned scientists to prove this absurd version. And it is indeed absurd, for the continuing, fading underground tremors bear witness to the natural character of the earthquake.

[Korotkov] But even these weak tremors are being used to whip up fear and anxiety. It is asserted, for example, that as a result of these movements of the earth's crust, volcanoes are being revived, and that soon lava will gush forth and inundate the Armenian nuclear power station, thus resulting in a gigantic catastrophe.

[Kukushkin] We think that all this will seem ridiculous and absurd to many of you. But unfortunately, there are such rumors, and they cannot be discounted. We sometimes ask ourselves: Who stands to gain from all this? In any case, not the Armenian people, who already have plenty of anxieties and concerns. The voice of reason requires people to think more clearly, to collect themselves, and to display common sense.

Party Official Caught With Funds for Strikers

LD1512222088 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1600 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Report by station correspondent Anatoliy Fedorov, accredited to the Ministry of Internal Affairs press bureau]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Here's something I learned at the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs that is worth thinking about. It's a report from Azerbaijan. Four days ago at 1200 at the GAI [state automobile inspection] post on the way out of Kirovabad cadets from the Orel Militia Secondary Special School had to fire warning shots into the air to stop a Volga car. In the trunk they discovered two attache cases containing R50,000. The detainees turned out to be as follows: Iskanderov, first secretary of Kedabekskiy Raykom of the Azerbaijan Communist Party, and Agayev, consultant at the house of political education of the republic's party Central Committee. During the preliminary investigation, the driver Sadykhov testified that Iskanderov was transporting the money for strikers in Baku.

On 13 December militiamen in Kirovabad again detained (Alekberov), a department chief of the Kedabek rayon ispolkom, who had organized a collection of funds to help strikers in Baku and who had handed R5,000 over to a representative of the organizational committee of participants in the unsanctioned rallies.

Special operational groups of the USSR Procuracy and Ministry of Internal Affairs are working in that city on appropriate investigations into all these cases. Criminal proceedings have been instituted against the individuals concerned.

Azerbaijani Refugee Aid Commission Meets

NC1612100088 Baku Domestic Service in Azeri 0440 GMT 16 Dec 88

[From the republican press review]

[Text] The republic-level commission that was set up to organize relief aid to the citizens who left their places of permanent residence in Armenia and moved to Azerbaijan met on 12 December. A special department was set up to deal with the work that will be carried out with the refugees from Armenia. Comrade Alish Lemberanskiy was elected the head of this department. Meanwhile, an information center was set up within the framework of the commission to deal with matters concerning the refugees.

Gasan Seidov, member of the Azerbaijan Communist Party Central Committee Bureau and chairman of the Azerbaijan SSR Council of Ministers, who is also the head of the commission, addressed the meeting.

Leading Dissident in Exile Criticizes Gorbachev

AU1612091288 Rome ANSA in English 0830 GMT 16 Dec 88

[Text] (ANSA) Rome—Dissident Soviet writer Vladimir Maximov, who lives in exile in Paris, has sharply criticized the new course launched by Kremlin leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

In an interview to the Italian periodical "PROSPETTIVE NEL MONDO" (Prospects In The World), Maximov testily asked what guarantees Gorbachev could give him. The only valid, guarantee would be to legalize the opposition, the writer said.

While admitting that the Soviet leader's current policy towards the West is "very effective", Maximov warned that in the general euphoria which currently reigns in the Western world, no one has taken note that the objectives of perestroyka are, on the one hand, the consolidation of Gorbachev's power, and on the other, the strengthening of socialism "of which Moscow speaks continuously", he added.

Maximov said what he wanted was a reform of society. "Glasnost is not enough. I want freedom of expression; the democratization of socialism", he told the interviewer.

Maximov is considered the spirit animating the "KONTINENT", the most prestigious magazine of Soviet dissident.

Vadim Medvedev Examines Socialism's Future

PM1512104888 London MORNING STAR in English 15 Dec 88 pp 6-7

[CPSU Central Committee Secretary Vadim Medvedev article: "Socialism for the 21st Century"]

[Text] Few, if any, doubt that socialism is now facing a new historic challenge and requires renovation and greater dynamism.

It is well known that adverse tendencies in our development became more evident from the end of the'70s.

Socialism's advantage over capitalism in economic development was lost, and we began to fall behind in the new field of technology.

Of course, not all socialist countries found themselves in an equal position, but if we take the overall picture we can see that it is characterised by growing difficulties and a slowing down of development.

There is a pressing need for deep change, a renewal of Soviet socialist society and major restructuring of various spheres of life.

This faces academics and social scientists with exceptionally responsible tasks.

It is important to answer the question of major concern to society—what social structure do we want to build through perestroyka?

The main approaches and the ideas of renovation which determine the kind of society we want to establish were summarised by the 19th party conference and were set out in Mikhail Gorbachev's report to that conference.

Our social scientists need to carry out research into the pressing issues, bearing this in mind.

What are the main elements of the present-day concept of socialism?

The principal one is Lenin's idea of socialism which he evolved by applying socialist ideas to the practice of revolutionary transformation of society in our country.

We should also take into account the fact that Lenin's views underwent important evolution during the transition from military Communism to the New Economic Policy.

The dogmatic interpretation of Leninism and the diversion from the principles formulated by it, which took place later, led to grievous consequences.

It would be wrong however to link the Stalin era with tactical errors alone, with haste, with a desire to reach the pinnacles of socialism in one jump.

The essence of the errors and distortions of socialism made at that time is deeper and lies in the diversion from Lenin's concept of the humanitarian essence of socialism.

The attempt to critically reassess Stalin's distortions of theory and to draw theory and practice closer together in the'50s and'60s, was eventually undermined and discredited by the idea of accelerating economic victory over capitalism and reaching Communism within 15 to 20 years.

The departure from Leninism actually deepened during the period of stagnation.

This found reflection in the advancement of the idea which developed that socialist society had been built in our country.

All of us became involved, in one form or another, in discussing this.

In the past few years, we have worked intensively to discover the character of the alien elements implanted into Marxism-Leninism and of their causes.

Regrettably, certain defects have been observed in this work.

Irresponsible attempts to slander Lenin's heritage and the principles and values of socialism have been made.

In what other way can we interpret the claims, published in the press, that the source of the command administration system allegedly goes back to Lenin and the attempts to negate the socialist character of our system and even to call the correctness of our choice of socialism into question?

It is impossible to formulate a modern concept of socialism without harmonising our ideals and goals with practical policy, especially the policy of perestroyka.

We are not going to restore the Leninist concept of socialism automatically. That would be too simple.

The problem is that we must grasp Lenin's ideas in the context of our present experience and current objectives.

One of the means of formulating a new concept of socialism is drawing together the experience of all socialist countries.

It is a diverse experience and this very diversity was often frowned upon in the past.

It was regarded as a departure from Marxism-Leninism and socialist internationalism.

That time is now gone for good. We believe that the diversity of the forms and methods of building socialism benefits us all and that co-operation between social scientists of the socialist countries is of vital importance.

In working out our socialist perspective and formulating a modern concept of socialism, we also cannot ignore the experience of humanity as a whole.

Lenin taught us that socialism was a logical stage in the development of human civilisation.

We must not only study other systems' achievements in science and engineering; but also social organisation, economic process, including large-scale and small-scale production, co-operatives, international economic integration and so on.

We must study the practice of the present-day social-democratic movement and its policies, especially the defence of the social and democratic gains of the working people.

We must overhaul our concept of the economic foundations of socialism.

Until recently we tackled the problem of diversity and the complex process of building socialism by encouraging the development of state property while imposing artificial restrictions on co-operative businesses and individual enterprise.

Socialisation was considered a yardstick for measuring the extent of socialism.

Planning was associated with the rigid centralisation of management and economic independence of enterprises. The relationship between goods and prices was underestimated.

The aim of the economic reform is to create and stimulate economic incentives for growth in production and its qualitative improvement through scientific and technological progress.

But the main thing is to restructure property relations and end the alienation between people and public property.

For the first time in decades we are witnessing an irreversible and powerful process of renewal of the forms of ownership of the means of production.

We must admit that this process has taken many political economists by surprise.

We have discovered a void in theory, misunderstanding and even suspicion. Our previous concepts of public property and our attitudes to this problem have proved to be untenable.

Take lease arrangements, for instance. We know that they ensure an explosive growth in agriculture, in heavy industry and in services.

We must lift the ban imposed on the lease system in 1930 and encourage and popularise lease arrangements as one of the advanced methods of using socialist property.

The same is true of the cooperatives. Co-operative businesses and individual enterprise are effective not only in small-scale production.

They may also be useful in organising auxiliary services.

We must review our concept of the relationship between good and prices under socialism and the relationship between planning and the market.

This is a necessary pre-condition for effective management based on economically sound methods.

It is also a necessary condition for eliminating bureaucratic administration and preventing adventurist decisions.

The market is an indispensable means of gearing production to increased demand and a major instrument of public control of quality and cost.

At the same time, we are convinced that the socialist economy cannot exist without strong leadership from the centre. The sphere of centralised management and its methods are, however, changing.

The centre should decide such questions as structural changes, investment policies, the implementation of major research and development programmes and the creation of conditions ensuring the effective work of enterprises as socialist commodity producers.

The most important objective now is to put into practice the fundamental political principle of socialism—giving all power to the working people and ensuring real participation of working people in deciding all the affairs of the state and society at the centre and at local level.

We are witnessing an historic moment when the country is trying to create a fundamentally new system of power and government based on broad democracy and the leading role of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Socialism is a system built by the mass of people. It is a society of the working people and for the working people.

But individuals and workers are not abstract units. Every person belongs to some social, ethnic and professional group with its own specific interests.

Consequently, socialism must create a political system reflecting the actual structure of society and the diversity of the interests and aspirations of all social groups and communities.

What are the necessary conditions for realising socialist pluralism?

First, we need to form and develop a broad network, or system, of organizations, unions and institutions, which would adequately and flexibly express the multitude of social interests.

Second, the functions of the party and the methods of its activity should be consistently changed with a view to profoundly democratising it.

Third, the idea of a state based on the law should be realised, the legal foundation of entire public life strengthened, and legal, political and cultural standards asserted.

The CPSU is willing to discuss any issue internally and is for the maximum public discussion.

In relations with public organisations the party respects their right to have independent opinions, to uphold their own positions and to defend their own interests.

In such conditions there are no grounds for creating any alternative parties to oppose CPSU policy.

In promoting democracy we attach principled importance to the role the party has to play in the life of our society.

It is crystal clear that there should be no diminution of the party's leading role by reducing it to merely coordinating functions.

On the contrary, we intend to enhance the influence of the party by focusing efforts on a more profound and fundamental elaboration of theory and practice, rather than by methods of command-style administration.

The new concept of socialism is inseparable from the comprehension of the place it occupies in the present-day world.

In this issue, we will probably have to return to the source of Lenin's understanding of peaceful coexistence by removing the deformaties of the subsequent period.

Peaceful co-existence, as we see it today, is a lengthy, long-term process, the historic limits of which are hard to establish.

The idea that capitalism and socialism can allegedly develop in a parallel manner has become obsolete.

It is the other way round. The two systems inevitably interact within one and the same world and their development inevitably intercrosses.

It is by no means a case of convergence or merger—each system continues to develop according to its own laws.

Present-day realities call for the clarification of priorities in relations between the two systems.

Today all humanity is concerned with ensuring its survival.

Coping with such tasks as working out new attitudes and a new idea of the modern concept of socialism requires tremendous intellectual work by our scientists and ideologists.

Drafting the concept of socialism in the 21st century, requires a free flow of intellectual thought.

Negative View of Non-Marxist Ideas Criticized

PM1512125588 Moscow SOVETSKAYA KULTURA in Russian 15 Dec 88 p 2

[I. Brazhnik "Notes from the All-Union Conference of Social Scientists": "'Blinders,' Spurs, and Disputes..."]

[Excerpts] Odessa—It is no coincidence that the headline contains those closely linked words—they were used at the conference in question. Its theme was: "The scientific bases for criticism of non-Marxist concepts in social science courses." The conference was organized by the USSR State Committee for Public Education and Moscow and Odessa universities.

Disputes were the normal form of exchange at the conference, and that is only natural. Whenever the words "we" and "they," "Marxist" and "non-Marxist" have been used in our social science, what was meant primarily was the things which divide us—the opposing of one side to the other. Rarely, very rarely, it meant the things which unite us or which can unite us for the sake of achieving common and general human goals. Yet that is now the very foundation on which the new political thinking is being built.

However, the inertia of the traditional, confrontational approach was at work in the conference hall. This was expressed, for example, in the stereotyped conventional definition of its general theme and in the majority of titles of the reports delivered.

For example, the very notion of "non-Marxist concepts" is consistently a weak spot—after all, we are dealing with a very broad range of views, from the anticommunist to the pro-Marxist. And whereas there is a lot to say about the former, the latter are mentioned only in passing—stereotyped images of the structure of everything non-Marxist as being utterly negative were presented.

I shared my doubts with Prof L. Anufriyev, organizer of the conference and pro-rector of Odessa University. Lev Aleksandrovich himself was distressed at the fact that inertia has proved so powerful. By the way, stereotyped approaches are becoming less and less popular. That was indicated by the reaction of the audience, especially the younger members.

Convincing arguments were presented by Prof I. Pantin, chief editor of the journal "RABOCHIY KLASS I SOVREMENNYY MIR," especially on the ability to transform compromise into a means of self development. The arguments advanced by V. Garadzhi, director of the CPSU Central Committee Academy of Social Sciences Institute of Scientific Atheism, showed the integrated nature of a common philosophy and the existence of common norms in a pluralism of the most diverse views, including contradictory views.

However, there wasn't enough exchange of experience, investigation of complex situations, or development of model methods for solving them.

Participants were asked: What awkward and complex questions are most frequently asked by students? The range of young people's intellectual interests is quite wide. At the same time it is marked by the depth of the problems raised. "Why was it not recognized for so long that many non-Marxist assertions were right?" was one of the most complex questions which the audience asked and which, to be honest, did it credit.

...Everyone is familiar with our age-old tradition whereby men of letters were, in current terminology, "independent" philosophers and economists, historians and politicians, who posed the eternal questions "What is to be done?" and "Who is to blame?" That tradition continued after the Great October Revolution, too. It was forcibly suppressed—but was revived time and again. A very important problem in this regard is that of the inner freedom of the social scientist, which is identical with the emancipation of the artist. This is anything but a simple coincidence—not a similarity, but a kinship of creative principles. A social science lecture is the speaker's particularly individual view, V. Kuptsov stressed. It is an act of personal reflection in front of an audience! The rigid patronizing regulations which tell you what you "cannot, can, and must" do are giving way, although not without a fight. [passage omitted]

The backstage meetings were also interesting. Yu. Linov, chief editor of the all-union translation center's Kiev office, was here in the role of observer. He was not surprised by the depressing statistics quoted by Prof A. Kredisov that only 3 (!) percent of social scientists use foreign language sources. "Yet they presume to criticize non-Marxist concepts 100 percent of the time!" Our interlocutor cited his own department: Among the many thousands of card indexes there are literally just a few nonstaff translators and scientific social science editors.

Academician Ye. Chelyshev, writing in KOMMUNIST (No 14, for September, published on the eve of the conference), gave a quite strict but fair evaluation of the state of social sciences in our country: "There are quite a few obstacles to the freeing of our social sciences from the shackles of stereotyped and rigid thinking, which is reinforced by dogmatic tenets deeply rooted...in our consciousness." The struggle against them will be considerable—a high standard of discussion will not come about of its own accord; it can only be achieved by open and genuine discussion and the beginning of true polemics.

Undoubtedly there is an increasing need for worthwhile opponents—you cannot fight paper tigers. In that regard the following idea was expressed: Why not invite non-Marxists, real scientific rivals, to perform that function? This would be entirely in the spirit of the new political culture. There would be real debates; the blinders would fall from the eyes, the prepared texts would disappear. A conclusion couched in the spirit of student optimism? There could be something in that, as they say in Odessa. But I think that it is supported by the demands for a new political culture which are growing on the fertile soil of today's political thinking.

Deputy Justice Minister Speaks on Human Rights

LD1012191688 Moscow World Service in English 0410 GMT 10 Dec 88

[Excerpts] In his address to the United Nations on Wednesday, Mikhail Gorbachev said this country was determined to play a bigger role in monitoring human rights as part of the United Nations efforts and within the framework of the European process. This means the Soviet Union intends to allow the international public to check the degree to which human rights observance in this country meets the relevant international standards. Deputy justice Minister Mikhail Vyshinskiy views this as a huge stride forward, resulting from the sweeping changes taking place in the USSR.

[Begin Vyshinskiy recording, in Russian with superimposed English translation] The nation's way of thinking has changed radically and so have its actions. We have proclaimed humanitarian effort as one of our priorities, which we are determined to promote both in the international arena and at home. Society's entire life, including its economic, social and cultural life, as well as human rights, should be built up on the basis of these priorities. [passage omitted] [end recording]

For many a long year the East-West differences in approaching this vitally important issue used to lead changes for the better, of which Mikhail Gorbachev spoke in part as he was addressing the United Nations. Specifically he said no people in the USSR were currently kept in prison for their political or religious views. A short while before, however, a high-ranking official of the Communist Party, Vadim Zagladin, told a news conference that there were such people in this country still. Does that mean that they were released within the time that had elapsed between the two statements? Deputy Justice Minister Mikhail Vyshinskiy again.

[Begin Vyshinskiy recording] Exactly so. It's already quite some time since the last prisoners of conscience, that is, people convicted for their religious views, were released on the eve of the millenium of Christianity in Russia. We can now speak only of those convicted on charges of anti-Soviet propaganda or spreading false allegations smearing the constitutional order, but there are no people still kept in prison on such charges either. In future one of these Criminal Code articles is to be reworded and brought in line with the international norms envisaging punishment for real damage to the constitutional order. The other article is expected to be cancelled altogether. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Political Prisoners Group Head on Human Rights
LD1312122188 Vilnius in English to North America 2300 GMT 10 Dec 88

[Summary] Povlias Peciliunas, chairman of the Lithuanian Prisoners' Committee, a former political prisoner himself, talked to a Vilnius radio journalist on human rights in Lithuania today.

P. Peciliunas said that the position of political prisoners has improved considerably. Attempts can be made to free them, and the campaign for their freedom brings about results.

At present there are political prisoners and deportees in Lithuania. A list of five political prisoners was handed to the republican procurator general by the Lithuanian Prisoners' Committee. These prisoners are:

Bishop Julijonas Steponavicus, who was sent into exile and has been in exile for 27 years, deprived of the possibility of carrying out his duty as a bishop; and Alfonsas Svarinskas, dean of Vidjukle, who went abroad not of his own free will. These two are regarded as deportees by the committee.

The following three people are regarded as political prisoners: Boleslovas Lizunas, Gintaras Muzikevicius, and Arunas Dainauskas. They are not serving their sentences at a camp for political prisoners, because they were charged with other crimes too.

Another important demand, together with the list mentioned above, was handed to the procurator general, stating that people released earlier are, in fact, only partially free. According to the document issued by the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, these prisoners were released because of the act of pardon. Members of the committee demand that the sentences given to these prisoners should now be declared unlawful, and that their rights be restored in full so that they can be entitled to moral and financial compensation.

Human Rights, Baltic States' Status Discussed
LD1412115588 Vilnius in Lithuanian to North America 0100 GMT 13 Dec 88

[Roundtable discussion on the 40th anniversary of the human rights declaration, between Vilenas Vadapalas and Antanas Bartusevicius, candidates of law sciences; Doctor of Church Law Pranciskus Vaicekonis; and journalist Edvina Butkus]

[Excerpts] [Bartusevicius] We can speak only about rudiments of political pluralism in the Soviet Union because an evil empire cannot become the Kingdom of Virtue in an instant. [passage omitted] It is very difficult to imagine a state without lawyers, yet we are going along the same road while isolating lawyers from taking part in the process of state governing. [passage omitted] There are only five deputies who are qualified lawyers at the Lithuanian supreme soviet, out of 350 deputies. At the same time we get an entirely different picture at the parliaments of the Western states. [passage omitted]

A fraction of 10 or 15 deputies at the parliament is a minority, yet we must aspire to achieve a majority in the parliament so that those whose thinking is different, who are of different generation, who are young and brave people, will be able to replace those people from the period of stagnation, whose thinking is also related to stagnation; those people who cannot think differently or live differently.

[Butkus] I would like to share my opinion and hear your opinion, too, on the so-called foreign factor and its impact on the solution of human rights issues in the Soviet Union. I would think that to ignore it and not to see it would be unrealistic....

[Vadapalas, interrupting] I am afraid I will be rather unpopular saying this, but to my mind the foreign factor has not been adequate. We must pay tribute to Gorbachev's personality, to the idea of demoncratization and openness which he promoted in our society. [passage omitted]

[Bartusevicius] I think that the foreign factor has been present and is important in the sphere of defending human rights. Like it or not, we must admit that issues concerning Andrey Sakharov and Lithuanian political prisoners were first of all heard quite often from different radio voices, as our Lithuanian radio could not broadcast this because of objectively existing reasons. In this way public opinion was being awakened.

I would like to believe that the West will be able to convince Gorbachev that it is necessary to allow the Baltic republics to solve economic, political and social questions more boldly, that is, issues concerning the legal status of their republic.

Otherwise I believe that the Soviet Union will find itself on the brink of a precipice, and there is the threat of the state system losing its autonomy in the coming decades if radical changes do not take place in the Soviet Union.

The initiators of these changes in the USSR at the moment are the Baltic republics; I have in mind first of all Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia. Therefore, to block the way for them would be a rather irrational thing to do. [passage omitted]

Estonia's Toome on Interethnic Relations
LD1512173288 Moscow TASS in English 1627 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 15 TASS—Problems of people's national self-awareness and inter-ethnic relations have caused everyone in the country, including Estonians, to reflect, the prime minister of Soviet Estonia told newsmen at a briefing here today.

Indrek Toome, chairman of the Council of Ministers in the Baltic republic, observed that "for a very long time we have not paid attention to inter-ethnic relations, have not studied them from a scientific viewpoint."

"That is why quite a few problems have piled up in the past decades," he added.

"We do not understand the notion of 'sovereignty' as secession from the Soviet Union, which would be unthinkable," said the head of the Estonian Government, replying to questions.

The republic was opposed to excessive regulations imposed by central bodies on economic, cultural and other aspects of life in republics, territories and regions, to the situation when their interests were ignored, Toome said.

The processes of democratisation and glasnost, currently under way in the country, made it possible to discuss widely many problems, including those related to inter-ethnic relations, he said.

Representatives of nearly 100 nationalities live in Estonia, and this question is being broadly discussed in the press, with different views, sometimes extreme and nationalist, being expressed.

"On the whole, however, the discussion proceeds without excesses, on a democratic footing," the Estonian prime minister pointed out.

Toome rejected the claims about clashes and conflicts on a nationality basis among representatives of various ethic groups living in Estonia.

"I state with full responsibility that not a single group clash has occurred this year on a nationality basis, either among schoolchildren or adults," he emphasised.

Toome said that Estonians were taking an active part in preparing a plenary meeting of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee to consider inter-ethnic relations. "I think that the plenum will define new vision and make fresh assessments of the party on these issues," he said.

PRAVDA Utilizes Quake in 'Slander Campaign'

LD1512112788 Tallinn Domestic Service in Estonian 1700 GMT 13 Dec 88

[Excerpts] We continue with the subject of Armenia. [passage omitted] But the all-union newspaper PRAVDA has used even such a disaster as an earthquake in its anti-Estonian slander campaign. We acknowledged this in our "From Border to Border" broadcast, and this will also be discussed in Tallinn, at the governmental Armenian assistance headquarters. Lembit Karri continues:

[Karri] The conversation which follows, at the governmental headquarters, took place an hour ago. (Ulo Jarv), head of the transport department of the Estonian SSR Council of Ministers, assesses the situation as follows:

[Begin recording] [(Jarv)] The emergency headquarters of the Armenian assistance governmental commission has been functioning now starting from 9 December, around the clock, and every day people and technology, as well as all kinds of goods and food, have been dispatched to Armenia from Estonia. [passage omitted] By now we have established a firm communications bridge with the Estonian SSR Council of Ministers' representative, who is in Yerevan, and beginning from tonight we will work through this channel, so that whatever is being requested first by them, we will also dispatch first.

[Karri] All the more striking for that is the falsification of facts printed in today's PRAVDA. Is one dealing here simply with a journalist ignoring professional ethics, or with deliberate cruel slander, meant for the all-union readership? If it is the latter then it is the intentional destruction of friendship between the peoples, and in such a tragic situation as the Armenian disaster. How do you, Ulo Jarv, assess this article published in PRAVDA?

[(Jarv)] Information evidently reaches journalists from various channels, and our recommendation to the press would be that if precise information is sought, for whatever kind of press, be it the central press or the republican, or even local, then be so kind as to approach our emergency headquarters. At the moment we have links with practically all forms of transport, as we do with Armenia, and we have quite a good idea of what has been done and what is about to be done. [end recording]

[Karri] Tonight, so far, there will be a communications link between Tallinn and Armenia, and an "Echo of the Day" correspondent has also been invited. We will broadcast what we will hear, early tomorrow morning.

*Lithuanian Restructuring Movement's First Sejm

WA1800025288 Vilnius SOVETSKAYA LITVA in Russian 15 Nov 88 p 3

[ELTA Report: "Lithuanian Restructuring Movement Sejm"]

[Text] The first session of the Lithuanian Restructuring Movement [LDP] Sejm was held on 13 November in Vilnius in the hall of the LiSSR Academy of Sciences. Council members of the LDP Sejm, V. Landsbergis and A. Yuozaytis, delivered the main reports on drafts of the new LiSSR Constitution and the Law on Changes and Amendments to the USSR Constitution. After discussing these issues, the Sejm passed resolutions. The resolutions note that it approves the new draft version of the LiSSR Constitution discussed at the LiSSR Academy of Sciences session on 21 September 1988 and finally prepared by the working group of the Presidium of the

LiSSR Supreme Soviet and proposes discussing and approving it at the forthcoming session of the LiSSR Supreme Soviet on 17 November 1988.

The desire was expressed that the session meetings of the republic's Supreme Soviet be broadcast live over television.

The Sejm opposed discussion of the draft Law on Changes and Amendments to the USSR Constitution published in the press as antidemocratic and contrary to the decisions of the 19th Party Conference. In addition, the third resolution notes that the promulgated draft USSR Law on Elections of People's Deputies is undemocratic, does not ensure the population equal voting rights and representation of equal union republics in USSR legislative bodies, and strengthens centralism and the bureaucratic system of government.

On the grounds that the legal guarantees of these democratic principles require, on merits and consistently, a re-examination of many articles of the promulgated draft law, it is proposed that discussion of it be removed from the agenda of the forthcoming session of the USSR Supreme Soviet and put off to a later date.

The Sejm also passed resolutions on guarantees of broader application of the Lithuanian language after proclaiming it the state language, on returning churches to the believers, and on principles of the activities of the LDP Sejm.

The first session of the LDP Sejm discussed questions of preparing for elections and other organizational questions.

L. Shepetis, secretary of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee, and K. Zaletskas, the first secretary of the Vilnius Gorkom attended the first session of the LDP Sejm.

Sajudis Sejm Extraordinary Session Reported

LD0712135688 Vilnius in Lithuanian to North America 0100 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Report by Roma Pakeniene—passages in quotation marks voice recordings]

[Summary] An extraordinary session of the restructuring movement Sajudis Sejm took place here in Vilnius on 5 December. This is already the second session since the Sajudis constituent congress which took place last October.

The objectives set for the session were to assess the current political situation here in Lithuanian after two Supreme Soviet sessions—the republican and the all-union one—and to discuss aims and objectives for the nearest future.

Concerning the political situation in Lithuania opinions were divided. Speaking about actions taken before the republican session of the Supreme Soviet, Vytautas Landsbergis, chairman of the Sejm Council, said that "Sajudis" aimed at two objectives: to convene another session of the Supreme Soviet and to make the deputies and electors more vigorous. According to V. Landsbergis the second objective has been achieved. There is no doubt that the next session of the Supreme Soviet will proceed with a greater degree of responsibility and political culture.

Concerning contacts with the republican authorities V. Landsbergis announced that these exist within the given boundaries of the contact group of the Sajudis, consisting of three people: Vytautas Landsbergis, Romualdas Ozolas, and Kazimieras Antanavicius. However, it cannot be maintained that in the nearest future the relationship between Sajudis and the authorities will develop in such a way that criticisms on both sides will be accepted with benevolence.

At the same time representatives from other areas of Lithuania expressed their criticism of Sajudis for lack of self-criticism: the rural population did not understand the position of Sajudis, and consequently did not support some of its actions. Reporting on the relationship with local authorities in the provinces, the representatives said that these were good in practical terms.

In many parts of Lithuania there is no real opposition to the Sajudis, except in Vilnius, Klaipeda, and Siauliai, where groups of "Yedinstvo" are in action. As is known, these groups are joined by Russians, most of whom are also military personnel.

Laws adopted at the USSR Supreme Soviet were not widely discussed at the Sejm session. However, in assessing these laws it was said that it is better to have a worse type of constitution that at least functions, than to have a democratic constitution that does not. Some speakers expressed the opinion that by putting the existing extraordinary occurrences that can be found in the Constitution to good use, much can be achieved.

Meanwhile, considerable stress was laid on V. Landsbergis' report on the official opinion voiced by Moscow concerning Baltic republics. He expressed his criticism concerning inconsistence and double-dealing by the supreme authorities, use of old methods for exerting pressure, and diktat.

Vytautas Landsbergis said, "Such double-dealing, if not two-faced restructuring, toward which those surrounding Mikhail Gorbachev are trying to direct the political development of the country, does not inspire confidence and takes away hope.

"Naive apprehensions are voiced in the world that the aspirations of smaller nationalities, that are exceptionally referred to as nationalist, may inflict harm on the national and economic restructuring of the Soviet Union.

"It is difficult to say why these aspirations are seen in such a narrow-minded and one-sided light. It may be because one is reaching for what is only on the surface, or perhaps it is the result of cleverly administered propaganda. It looks as if one believes that even two-faced and suspiciously inconsistent restructuring, when external signs of liberation are followed by a tightening of a screw in the Constitution, still deserves applause, international admiration, and generous credits. It looks as if one does not notice the formation of a future autocracy that is taking place in Soviet Society, which is allegedly becoming democratic. The cult of an ever stronger center is being supported; the possibility to declare dictatorship in 5 minutes has already been constitutionally legalized.

"Well, if the world wants to be deceived once again it can succeed in having it once again. There is only one thing left for us and that is to pay less attention to words, and especially to such changeable ones, and believe more in the idea; to work for the sake of genuine democratic and the rule-of-law restructuring, both here in Lithuania and indirectly in the entire country."

Romualdas Ozolas spoke about aims and objectives of the Sajudis. He said that now the necessity for giving policies a prognosis has arisen in the Sajudis. Until now the main objective declared by the "Sajudis" was independence—however, this is only the means, as R. Ozolas said; the aim of the Sajudis is our nation, which is alive and capable of solving its own problems.

R. Ozolas said: The second important task is the local Soviets. These have to be taken by deputies who express people's will and who are capable of solving tasks when the crucial moment comes."

Great emphasis was laid on the importance of the coming elections to local soviets and the preparation work for them.

Decisions and resolutions on the issues discussed at the Sejm were adopted; the Sejm made an appeal to the Presidium of the Lithuanian SSR Supreme Soviet and to the deputies of the republican Supreme Soviet, as well as to all supporters of restructuring, and the Estonian Supreme Soviet and Popular Front.

A decision has been made to announce a civic Advent, which would mean a time for meditation, concentration, and solidarity, without organizing any actions on a wide scale.

An appeal was also made to all inhabitants of Lithuania to switch off the lights for half an hour on 24 December at 2100, and light candles on the windows of one's house. This would be regarded as a symbol of referendum of Lithuanian families and self-dependence of the Lithuanian nation.

Lithuanian Central Committee Makes Changes

LD1312123388 Vilnius in Lithuanian to North America 0100 GMT 10 Dec 88

[Text] Today a plenum of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee took place in Vilnius. Organizational questions were discussed at the plenum. Nikolay Mitkin was released of his post as second secretary of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee and member of the bureau because of his retirement.

The plenum elected Vladimir Berezov second secretary of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee. Until now he was head of [the Organizational party Work] Department of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central committee.

Branislav Zaykauskas, previously chairman of the Lithuanian SSR State Planning Committee, was also elected secretary of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee.

Poet Alfonsas Maldonis was elected candidate member of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee Bureau.

Apart from this, Albertas Laurinciukas was released of the post of editor-in-chief of the daily TIESA because of his taking up a creative work.

Mindaugas Barysas was confirmed editor-in-chief of the daily TIESA. Algirdas Brazauskas, first secretary of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee, made a speech at the plenum.

Lithuanian Procurators Promote Openness

LD1512141988 Vilnius TIESA in Lithuanian 15 Nov 88 p 3

[Text] During an election meeting of the Lithuanian SSR Procuracy Party Organization, Communists spoke out for openness in procuracy work and collaboration with individuals from other professions. A proposal was made for the establishment of a support group for the Lithuanian Restructuring Movement. This was accomplished shortly thereafter.

Currently, a draft law, involving the fundamental law of the republic—the constitution—is under consideration. Researchers have already prepared one of the versions of the constitution. The jurists are still quite passive in this respect. Procuracy party members have agreed that the establishment of a Lithuanian SSR lawyers' union is essential. This should unite the court, the procuracy, legal workers, and lawyers with instructors and lecturers, who work for other organizations. This type of union should participate more actively in improving the existing laws and drafting or adopting the new ones, thus assisting in raising the level of professional skill. No less important is the establishment of contacts with similar organizations and unions in other countries. This would, in turn, have a favorable impact upon legal worker training and the improvement of our laws. However, in order for this idea to be put into practice, it must have the support of the Lithuanian SSR Ministry of Justice, the Supreme Court and the College of Barristers.

Communists are concerned that the republic's procuracy is not totally independent, but is part of a centralized system of the USSR Procuracy. This may prove to be an obstacle in the quest for Lithuania's political, cultural and economical sovereignty. In view of this fact, it was unanimously decided, at the meeting, to petition the Supreme Soviet Presidium of the Lithuanian SSR to change the order of election for the republic procurator. It was proposed that a procurator be elected by the Lithuanian SSR's Supreme Soviet or by a future convention of the republic deputies.

Lithuanian Monument to Stalin Victims Urged

LD1512141888 [Editorial Report] Vilnius TIESA on 11 October 1988 on page 4 carried a 1,000-word article by Milda Augulaityte entitled "A Monument to Sorrow and Remembrance," which notes suggestions from its readers for the construction of a Lithuanian monument to honor the victims of Stalin. These are in answer to an appeal by G. Tautvydas, assistant chairman, Lithuanian Fund Committee, which appeared in TIESA 11 September 1988.

The author notes: "We have barely encountered anywhere in our histroy a more frightful tragedy than that of Stalin's repression and deportations which took place in 1941 and the post-war years. Thousands of people were disgraced and comdemned to death and suffering; spiritual values were destroyed; thought processes were enslaved; destinies were broken—this is our misfortune, or sorrow and an everlasting wound. This is a national tragedy and the nation must make it immortal."

In solliciting reader's suggestions for a national monument G. Tautvydas had presented his own suggestion to build a monument in Rumsiskiai, "Where all of Lithuania has been assembled on a small patch of soil."

Several of the readers support this proposal, stating that the above is an ideal site for this monument, since it is, in fact, a "miniature Lithuania, spacious and easily accessible for visitors."

Another reader disagrees, stating "all that which is characteristic of Lithuania, of Lithuanian culture, and that which distinguishes our nation from others, is concentrated in Rumsiskiai. Echoes of Stalinism should not find a place in this corner. It would not be appropriate to defile the meaning of this museum." He proposes, instead, to construct such a memorial in "Kaunas near the Fort Nine Monument. Together, these two monuments would complement one another beautifully and would illuminate reflections of the duel which took place in Lithuania between Stalinism and Hitlerism." A reader from Vilnius suggests her city as a site for the monument "because many of those deported Lithuanians passed through this sorrowed and longed for historical center for their first and their final time."

The author observes that no area of Lithuania, be it large or small, escaped Stalin's iron fist. She notes: "The horror of those years is coming to light now that one speaks more freely of things about which one remained silent for decades."

Some suggestions are also made to mark the memory of Stalin's victims with city and rayon memorials at local museums. Rainiai forest in Telsiai Rayon, the site of mass executions and a gravesite for these victims, was also mentioned as a possible site. Another reader states: "Memorials to our nation's misfortune should be erected everywhere, since there doesn't exist a spot in Lithuania that did not experience Stalin's genocide. Suggested also was the erection of "a symbolic cross in Krasnoyarsk Kray to mark the location of the Kansk camp, through which led the paths of many of our deportees and where the most beautiful bloom of our nation remains for ever," The author notes that an official excursion visited the Lithuanian cemeteries in Igark, Krasnoyarsk; another visit is slated for spring.

Some reader's letters caution against placing too much emphasis on Stalin's victims while excluding those who were victims of Hitler. One reader suggest Hitler victims deserve a memorial "ten times larger than those of Stalin." The author observes every loss constitutes a source of live sorrow for all of us. "May this future monument become a symbol of grief which shall immportalize all of Lithuania's victims, may it also become a symbol of reconciliation among us."

The author adds that all of the readers' suggestons will be passed on to the commission for the construction of a monument to Stalin victims.

Radioactive Waste Leak Reported at Ignalina AES

LD0912203488 Vilnius Domestic Service in Lithuanian 1005 GMT 8 Dec 88

[Summary] Stasys Tarbunas, deputy health minister at the Lithuanian SSR Ministry of Health, reported on the telephone this morning that a group of physicists, doctors, and representatives from the Sajudis movement are discussing the incident which occurred at the Ignalina AES.

Last week a group of geologists from the Geology Research Administration, investigating the state of subsoil waters around the Ignalina AES, discovered a radioactive material dump in the open air on the AES' grounds. Radioactive materials amounting to about 900 cubic meters are exposed to rain and snow, and radioactive substances are penetrating the underground waters and going even deeper.

Doctors and leaders of the republican government are prepared to take actions against the management of the Ignalina AES.

The radiation level at the fence which divides the staff working at the plant and the area containing the radioactive materials is 100 times higher than the background radiation.

*Findings on Kuropaty Woods Executions Reported

WA1800025888 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 27 Nov 88 p 3

[Article by N. Matukovskiy, IZVESTIYA correspondent, Minsk: "The Truth About the Kuropaty"]

[Text] Our newspaper has already written on two occasions of the tragedy which took place in the Kuropaty Woods, not far from Minsk. The tragedy was revealed by accident, last spring. Initially, excavator operator N. Taran, who was digging a trench for a gas main found human skulls and two pairs of shoes; later, while playing the Zarnitsa military-sports game, digging trenches, Minsk school students found the remnants of more than 30 people. What shook up everyone was one detail: each skull showed a bullet hole, most frequently in the back. Was this, therefore, a mass murder? But who were the victims and who were the killers?

The conclusion of archaeologists from the Belorussian SSR Academy of Sciences Institute of History, expressed in the newspaper LITERATURA I MASTATSTVA simply and unequivocally: The remains discovered in Kuropaty were those of victims of Stalinist repressions of 1937-1941. However, this assumption by the scientists was insufficient. Unquestionable and irrefutable proof and, above all, witnesses, eyewitnesses, were needed.

On 14 June G. Tarnavskiy, the Belorussian SSR prosecutor, instigated a criminal case on the basis of the fact of the discovery of the burial of unknown persons. A governmental commission was immediately set up which, in addition to specialists from law enforcement authorities, included noted public figures: V. Bykov, writer and Hero of Socialist Labor; M. Savitskiy, USSR people's painter; Hero of the Soviet Union M. Osipova, Hero of Socialist Labor D. Chervyakov and other noted individuals.

In the course of a few months the group of investigators consisting of N. Kichiporenko, S. Kovrigo and O. Abadovskiy, did a tremendous amount of work. Eight of the presumed 510 burial sites were exposed, and a large number of various expert evaluations were made; 170 witnesses were found and interrogated. And all that occurred after so many years!

A bitter thought which gives no rest is, what if the children had been playing their game and dug "trenches" in another forest? What if the track of the gas main had been dug 2 or 3 kilometers to the left or to the right? Why is it that the Kuropaty tragedy remained wrapped in secrecy for several decades? There were people still alive who had seen, heard and remembered everything which had taken place here. An incomprehensible phenomenon: We can remember petty personal insults, injustices and words said in the heat of passion for many long years. Yet we forget that which is unforgivable to forget. What is this? Is it simply the philistine unwillingness to "rub salt on the wounds," to stir up the past, indifference toward one's own past and one's history or fear and shame of it?... This is not surprising in an atmosphere of civic indifference which is increasingly protecting the "great leader:" Allegedly, he was not to blame, he personally knew nothing of this. Enough! He knew everything! This was not because he was properly informed but because those who did the act zealously and strictly followed his "theory:" The more there will be socialism in the country the more will there be enemies in it and the more fiercely they will oppose socialism. This was a monstrous "theory" and equally monstrous "practice."...

As I read the minutes of the interrogations and the conclusions of the experts, I unwittingly ask myself again and again: Perhaps we have burdened enough the reader with new facts of the crimes of Stalinism and the reader has been sufficiently burdened by the difficult problems of today? In the final account, the 27th Congress and the 19th Party Conference made an assessment of the past. Yes, but the letter written by N. Andreyeva was published and described as a "document" after the 27th Party Congress. I. Shekhovtsov took to court the writer A. Adamovich for "insulting the leader" not before but after the 19th Party Conference. These people, and others after them, demand that the "father of the peoples" be left to rest in peace, and not to "defame" our glorious past or to exaggerate the scale of the crimes.

The word belongs to the documents and the witnesses. It is impossible to quote everything that was gathered in the course of the investigation and I shall quote merely a few pages from the case in order to recreate, albeit approximately, the picture of what took place in only one place in the country—the Kuropaty.

From the resolution on closing the criminal case:

According to the conclusion of the comprehensive forensic and criminal expertise, the human remains found in six burial places belonged to no less than 391 people, 114 of them male, 21 female and the rest impossible to determine. The people's ages ranged from 20 to 60. A total of 164 cartridges and 21 bullets from a Nagan revolver, model 1895, and one TT cartridge were found in the graves.

Of the 213 investigated shots, 192 were in the back of the head; the others were in the upper parietal part of the head. There was one penetration in 182 craniums and two in 29; there were three bullet entries in five craniums....

The crime experts studied the shoes and objects found in the graves. Forty-five shoes had been made in the USSR, including at the Krasnyy Bogatyr factory in Moscow; 28 came from the Krasnyy Treugolnik factory in Leningrad. Twenty-five shoes were made nonprofessionally: home-made boots, and galoshes made of automobile tires. The purses contained 78 coins of 2, 3, 10, 15, 20 and 50 kopeks. All the coins had been issued in the USSR in 1925, 1926, 1928, 1933, 1935 and 1936.

Of all the objects which were found, only one "talked." On a comb, someone had written with a sharp object, in Polish: "Difficult minutes of a prisoner. Minsk. 25 April 1940. Thinking of you makes me despair. 26 April (I cried, a difficult day)." However, even the person who had written such bitter words in minutes of despair remained anonymous. I leafed through the minutes of the interrogation of witnesses. Could it be that the name of even a single victim would come up?

In the course of the investigation it was established that there were 55 witnesses from the neighboring villages of Tsna, Zabolotye, Drozdovo, Malinovka, and Zelenyy Lug, who had witnessed the events: M. Lantasova, O. Komarovskaya, O. Chervinska, Ye. Matskevich, N. Khomich, V. Yermolovich, O. Prigodskaya and others. They witnessed the way NKVD personnel drove the people to the forest in closed trucks and shot them. They saw covered and open graves and saw in them those who had been shot.

Could one remember something one has seen 50 years ago? In order to determine the accuracy of the testimony of the witnesses, the investigators conducted an experiment. They asked witness N. Karpovich to point out in the forest the place where the shooting took place. And although in the course of several decades the forest in Kuropaty had changed, he led the investigators and confidently said: Here. They began to dig and found a new big grave with remains.

N. Karpovich: "The fence was thick, made of planks. However, it had not been completed until the end of 1939. It was guarded on the inside by the NKVD wearing camouflage uniforms. The people were taken there in the evening. On two occasions I saw them being shot. They were placed above the pit, in a row.... My father and I approached the pit which was large, about 5 meters, and was filled with corpses covered with twigs. We raised the twigs and saw people. They were dressed simply, in jackets and their shoes were clearly rural...."

N. Nekhaychik: "After the trucks passed, the boys and I counted the shots. There were 30-40 or, sometimes, 70. Usually, two to three trucks came but, sometimes, even six-seven."

S. Khmelnikova: "In 1939-1940 people were being shot to death in three areas, fenced and guarded. Sometimes the shooting went on every day and sometimes at several day intervals. One could hear shouting and shots. As a rule, the people were being shot in the evenings and during the night. They were being brought from the direction of Minsk in closed vehicles."

I. Alekhno: "... The fact that people were being executed in the forest I found from Batyan Grigoriy Ivanovich. He lived in Tsna Village and worked for the NKVD. Once, slightly drunk, Batyan said that he personally had participated in the shootings. He was subsequently expelled from the NKVD for blabbering."

Fifty-five eyewitnesses are almost unanimous in repeating the same facts, complementing each other's statements. Many of them recalled that soon afterwards, bright red mushrooms began to grow in the forest at the place of the execution, resembling chanterelles. Neither adults nor children ever picked them, but looked at them in horror.

However, not one of the witnesses was able to identify even a single one among the dead. They simply had no way of finding that out. But the name of one of the executioners came out, who had died immediately after the war—Batyan Grigoriy Ivanovich. The investigators, however, kept "digging" ever deeper and deeper. They found several former NKVD officials who had been directly involved in the Kuropaty crime.

S. Kharitonovich (since 1938 guard in the inner jail of the NKVD on Uritskogo Street): "... The only one among the NKVD investigators I remember is Sheykin. He too was arrested in 1938 and kept in the jail on Volodarskogo Street. Sometimes the investigators ordered us not to let the prisoners sleep at night, which is what we did. If the inmate would fall asleep we would wake him up. I do not remember the names of the inmates. We took them out of the cells in a truck, carrying 15 to 20 people. I do not know where they were taken. Only once was I taken to cover a grave.... The corpses in it had already been covered and we merely smoothed up the ground. All people on duty at the jail participated in the executions: Koba (what a coincidence!), Abramchik Foma, and the leader, Yermakov. In the night after the execution they would come back at 3 or 4 am and would keep drinking until the morning in the NKVD cafeteria. The next day they would come to work late.

"Abramchik Foma said that the people were stood by the pit and executed with Nagans. Before the execution the people shouted: 'Long live the Soviet system! Long live Stalin!' The NKVD personnel who had taken part in all of this began to be detained in 1938. Deputy Commandant Yermakov could not stand it, and shot himself.... The guard Tararukhin worked with me. He could not stand it and submitted his resignation. He was executed. I too wrote a report and at a Komsomol meeting I was severely reprimanded and I was forced to go on working. Koba Stepan rose to the rank of colonel. He was a friend of Tsanava and died in 1948 or 1949."

The most terrible word at that time was "NKVD." It was whispered with circumspection. However, even at that time there were people in the NKVD who preserved their humanity, despite everything. For example, former prosecutor G. Ruchan, who was interrogated as a witness, lost his position for his refusal to sanction forged cases submitted for consideration by the "threesome." Several prosecutors in Minsk paid with their lives for such actions.

V. **Karpik** (former chairman of the special collegium, Belorussian SSR Supreme Court): "... The republic's NKVD leadership encouraged coercive measures of influence during interrogations. No proof of guilt was provided at the trials. I repeatedly sent such cases for additional investigation, for which I was accused of liberalism and, in 1938, removed from my position and expelled from the party."

The list of such witnesses could be continued. However, I kept leafing, page after page, in an effort to find perhaps even a single name, a single specific person who died in Kuropaty. Finally, I came across a sheet which left virtually no hope. It was the interrogation of the former NKVD official K. Kulinkovich, who had worked in the organs for 1 year as operational representative:

"...On 25 June 1941 our organization was evacuated to Mogilev. However, the day after that I and the other operative group were sent to Minsk to destroy the files of the party raykoms and gorkoms and of the NKVD. By the time we arrived in Minsk these files had already been destroyed during the bombing and the fires. We then destroyed everything else and returned to Mogilev."

Yet something nonetheless remained! This was confirmed during the investigation of the former Belorussian SSR MGB official V. Mikhayevich who had access to the files of NKVD criminal cases in the 1950s. Although there were many cases, each one of them contained several investigations compressed in no more than two-three pages. All the accused were young people who had crossed the border in 1937-1938. All cases were "structured" identically: On the first page the accused declared himself innocent. On the second he said that he was an agent of foreign intelligence and at the end of the page was the entry: VMN (supreme penalty), followed by the words: "Sentence executed in Minsk." However, there was not even a hint of the place of execution. Furthermore, there is confirmation (as recorded in the case) that the so-called "enemies of the people" were executed not only in Kuropaty.

Let us not forget that traces of the crimes were being thoroughly and skillfully concealed. Not only the files were destroyed. The investigation on the Kuropaty case identified more than 40 former NKVD personnel. Some of them, including A. Volchek, former chief of the investigations department, I. Kuntsevich, deputy chief of the department, investigators V. Bykhovskiy, V. Yermolayev, K. Kuleshov and others, were criminally indicted. They were sentenced to jail terms. Many of them are already dead or died during the war and the place of residence of others seems impossible to determine. The sentence reads as follows: "For violation of legality."

Yes, they indeed violated the law but that was not why they were detained but for keeping in the eyes of the people as innocent and pure the main executioners in Minsk and Moscow. Look at the impressive chronicle which obtains. The following people's commissars of the Belorussian SSR NKVD were criminally indicted "for violation of socialist legality" and other state crimes:

G.A. Molchanov, former NKVD people's commissar from 28 November 1936 to 4 February 1937. Sentenced to the supreme penalty on 2 November 1937.

B.D. Berman, former NKVD people's commissar from 4 March 1937 to 22 May 1937. Sentenced to the supreme penalty on 22 February 1939.

A.A. Nasedkin, former NKVD people's commissar from 22 May 1937 to 17 December 1938. Sentenced to the supreme penalty on 25 January 1939.

The executioners themselves became the victims of that terrifying Moloch, of the system which today we know as Stalinism. Who will believe that Stalin did not know the reason for which the NKVD people's commissars were being detained in the republic?

The last page of the last volume: "From the resolution on closing the case: Therefore, the investigation has reliably determined that between 1937 and 1941 mass executions by firing were committed by the NKVD organs in the Kuropaty Forest. It does not seem possible to determine the identity of those who were executed and the specific grounds for the execution (as though such grounds were sought at that time)...." Taking into consideration the fact that Belorussian SSR NKVD leaders, guilty of such repressions, as well as other individuals were also sentenced to death or have died, the case is therefore closed."

Alas, as it were, we are unable to determine who was executed at Kuropaty. Why speak of names when we cannot even determine the precise number of victims?

The investigators say that no less than 30,000 people have been buried in the 510 presumed graves. According to archaeologists, the figure is much higher, based on the fact that there could have been as many as 900 graves but that some of them are under the ring road which circles the edge of the forest.

Yes, today I am deeply convinced that a public trial of Stalin should take place as soon as possible. It is not even a question of condemning the cult of Stalin and his main assistants, and to rehabilitate the innocent. Stalin and his circle were condemned as early as at the 20th and 22nd CPSU Congresses and the rehabilitation of those who were repressed goes on. However, some people in our country and abroad believe that it is socialism that is to be blamed for the repressions. The public trial must, in addition to everything else, convincingly prove that socialism has nothing in common with Stalinism.

Ukrainian Commission on Repression Meets

LD0912141588 Kiev Domestic Service in Ukrainian 0445 GMT 8 Dec 88

[Text] There has been a meeting of the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee commission on the additional study of materials connected with repressions which took place in the republic in the 30's and 40's and at the beginning of the 50's. The commission, created on 13 September by the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee at the regular meeting, heard and discussed information from the Ukrainian SSR Public Prosecutor's office and the Supreme Court about the course of examining materials connected with the rehabilitation of citizens repressed on thoroughly unfounded grounds in past years. We note that through the protests of the Ukrainian SSR public prosecutor and the public prosecutors in oblasts, 1,014 citizens have been rehabilitated by the courts this year. The review and examination of documents have been entrusted to [words indistinct] employees. The decisions by judicial bodies on rehabilitation have been made in full conformity with the requirements of socialist legality. Restoring rehabilitated former CPSU members to the party is under consideration. It has been recognized that the republic's public prosecutor's office and the Committee for State Security have stepped up advance work for matters concerning this category, and material is also now being studied concerning individuals sentenced in 1930 by the Ukrainian SSR Supreme Court in the trial of the so-called league for the Liberation of Ukraine, headed by Yefremov, one-time vice president of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences.

There will be reports in the press about the results of the review of these and other materials. The commission's work continues.

Ukrainian Central Committee Changes Reported

LD1512122088 Kiev Domestic Service in Ukrainian 0330 GMT 13 Dec 88

[Text] The Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee Plenum has ended in Kiev. Participants discussed an organizational question and released Titarenko from his duties as Politburo member and second secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee in connection with his retirement on pension.

Participants in the plenum elected Ivashenko, member of the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee Politburo, as second secretary and Vinnik, first secretary of the Donetsk party obkom, as a member of the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee Politburo.

Kryuchkov was released from his duties as secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee in connection with the annulment of this post.

Participants in the plenum approved the composition of the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee's commissions. A decision on this question will be published in the press.

Georgian Leaders Debate Events in Tbilisi

PM1512145188 Tbilisi ZARYA VOSTOKA in Russian 7 Dec 88 p 1

[GRUZINFORM report: "Meeting at Georgian Communist Party Central Committee"]

[Excerpts] A meeting with representatives of the scientific and creative intelligentsia and leaders of higher educational establishments, a number of ministries and departments, creative unions, and the mass media of the republic was held 5 December at the Georgian Communist Party Central Committee. The meeting was devoted to an analysis of the reasons for and consequences of the well-known events of the last 10 days of November this year in Tbilisi. There was a thorough talk and frank exchange of opinions of the occurrence and of present-day problems and the prospects for the republic's further development.

D. Patiashvili, first secretary of the Georgian Communist Party Central Committee, led the meeting and addressed it. [passage omitted]

The speakers noted that everything which took place near the government center and the attendant circumstances gave rise to a tense situation not only in the capital but also throughout the republic. The repercussions of these events continue to be manifested. In particular this was the case during the 3 December meeting in Kutaisi in the course of which unacceptable slogans and demands were put forward and public order was disrupted. The press and television informed the republic's public of all this in detail. These actions, which essentially openly contradict our constitution, cannot fail to generate universal indignation and denunciation, it was stated repeatedly during the meeting.

At the same time the meeting's participants paid special attention to young people's role and place at the present stage. They noted the younger generation's sharply increased social and political activeness and the graphically manifested desire to resolve the problems which have accumulated and which are arising in many fields of the republic's life, be they questions of the development of its native language, or of ecology, or of the conservation of monuments. The vigor and noble impulses of young men and women must really serve the republic's interests. For this, the speakers said, we must be closer to young people.

Restructuring has shed light on many chronic problems which it was formerly the custom not to mention, and on many new problems. It is necessary to act more vigorously to eliminate and overcome them and to resolve them within the unity of the republic's vital interests and socioeconomic development, to seek to eliminate as rapidly as possible the tension which is arising, to rid ourselves more boldly of the style of command based on orders, and to treat democracy and its real embodiment solicitously and carefully. It should be borne in mind that negative phenomena always give grounds for dissatisfaction.

At the same time it is clear that restructuring has opponents and that there are forces delaying the renewal process. Order and actual power of the people do not suit corrupt elements and all kinds of businessmen from the shadow economy.

An analysis of the 23-29 November events and other processes taking place attests that, in making use of democracy, their organizers openly flout Soviet laws, deliberately inflate difficulties and problems, fuel emotions, and seek by their actions to split society.

That is why the question of consolidating all progressive restructuring forces is particularly topical today, it was noted during the meeting, widely enlisting primarily young people and youth associations and formations. The republic's young men and women have a good future and many glorious deeds ahead of them. And it is the duty of every senior comrade to help them see everything bright brought to us by restructuring and all the opportunities for the development of the individual opened up by the irreversible process of democratization.

Comrades N. Popkhadze and D. Margvelidze took part in the meeting.

Georgian Demographic Problems Debated

PM1512151588 Tbilisi ZARYA VOSTOKA
in Russian [illegible] Dec 88 p 3

[GRUZINFORM report: "Demographic Problems the Focus of Attention"]

[Excerpts] A session of the Georgian SSR Council of Ministers government demographic commission has been held, led by O. Cherkeziya, chairman of the Georgian SSR Council of Ministers. [passage omitted]

Questions connected with elaborating the state program for improving the demographic situation in the republic were the subject of a businesslike, committed talk at the session. The speakers voiced constructive proposals on ways of normalizing the demographic situation and stressed the need to elaborate and implement specific proposals in this direction. Particular attention was paid to resolving tasks of demographic policy—the natural shifting of the population (birth rate, mortality rate, marriage, natural increase, life expectancy) and the directing of migration into the channel desirable for society. It was said that the initial principle of demographic policy should be the all-around encouragement of the birth rate, the increasing of the need to have children, and concern for their education and health.

It was deemed necessary to make an all-around study of the factors influencing the birth level, and in particular factors like women's employment in social production, changes in the sex and age structure, birth control within the family, urbanization, the divorce rate and level of culture and education, the age at which people get married, socioeconomic conditions, ethnic and demographic features, and so forth. It was pointed out that with a consideration for these factors it is necessary to outline relevant measures to further improve and develop the demographic processes of the population's reproduction. [passage omitted]

Appointment of New Georgian KGB Chief Reported

PM1312164188 Tbilisi ZARYA VOSTOKA
in Russian 3 Dec 88 p 1

[Georgian SSR Supreme Soviet Presidium 2 December Decree on appointment of G.G. Gumbaridze as chairman of the Georgian SSR KGB]

[Text] The Georgian SSR Supreme Soviet Presidium resolves:

To appoint Comrade Givi Grigoryevich Gumbaridze chairman of the Georgian SSR KGB.

[Signed] P. Gilashvili, chairman of the Georgian SSR Supreme Soviet Presidium.

V. Kvaratskheliya, secretary of the Georgian SSR Supreme Soviet Presidium.

Tbilisi, 2 December 1988.

Odessa Power Outage Exposes Official Passivity

PM1412164988 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
14 Dec 88 Morning Edition p 3

[Own Correspondent F. Chernetskiy report under the rubric "Reportage Under Duress": "13 Years Later"]

[Text] Odessa—In comparison with the Armenian tragedy, the effects of attacks by the other elements seem pale: attacks such as the one which hit Odessa in early December. But it must be mentioned, because a disaster is still a disaster, even if it far from always catches people unawares.

On December 3 it turned frosty. The thermometer plunged to zero. It began to turn icy. A thick layer of ice covered the wires and branches. The ice thickened. Wires began to snap like match sticks, branches broke, and trees were uprooted. Water pipes were put out of action and the heat supply to the heating systems failed. The city was plunged into darkness; life was paralyzed. Some 250 population centers in the oblast were left without electricity and water.

Elements are elements, and everything could be blamed on them, but for one significant detail. The fact is that 13 years ago at this same time of year, early December, precisely the same sort of catastrophe occurred in Odessa city and oblast. Then, too, 13 years ago, there were plenty of calls to draw lessons from what happened. Comprehensive programs were urgently drawn up, the very principles of urban planning were all but revised, and plans were drawn up for the creation of a reliable energy supply system and the modernization of utilities in the town and countryside.

And now, 13 years on, nature seems to have decided to test whether the lessons of the past have been learned and what all those comprehensive programs and plans were worth. Not a lot, it turned out.

Here is a typical feature. Odessa's water is supplied from a single source, the "Dnestr" water supply station 40 km from the city. A vital installation in the city's life support system. Back then, 13 years ago, it was put out of action when the ice had scarcely begun to form: the high voltage lines which supplied electricity to the power station broke. The situation was aggravated by the fact that all communication with the "Dnestr" station had broken down. Back then, after the first catastrophe, plans were drawn up to run an underground power supply cable to the water supply station, precisely in case of a power line failure. In addition, it was considered necessary to install an independent generator at the "Dnestr" station. Since then nothing has been done. And it has all happened again: the station was left without power and without a link with the city.

Here is another example. The ice paralyzed the airport and interrupted bus traffic. A stream of extra passengers poured into the railway station. The bad weather had disrupted the railways, too, of course: electric engines had to be replaced by diesels. But it was incomprehensible why such a facility as the railway station should be without power. It transpired that the independent backup generator intended to serve the station had already been diverted to another use, the operation of lap switches. But the station had been "forgotten."

Even then, 13 years ago, they talked about the need for emergency generators at the main hospitals, bakeries, and other vital facilities in the city. They had none then, they have none now. Then there was a heated discussion that only in Odessa could it be tolerated that high voltage power supports could be placed along the main streets and avenues of a city of 1 million people—they were a constant threat to people's lives. Has anything changed, perhaps? Have those lines been removed or hidden underground? Nothing has changed. On the contrary, the city now has new high tension lines within its boundaries. Furthermore, they are lightweight designs, presumably so as to save money. And it is no coincidence that almost one-half of the power lines to the Tairov and Chernomorka settlements were put out of action—around 50 pylons had broken.

To cut a long story short, now, just as 13 years ago, the energy system in the oblast and city failed the test; it "flunked." An emergency meeting cited the following figures. To maintain the city's power system in a normal state 15-20 km of power supply lines need capital repair each year. But in fact nothing is being done; they are hardly managing to eliminate outages. There are no cables, pylons, or equipment for substations. The city is still using 100-year old power lines built by a Belgian electricity company.

To find out what lessons had been learned I had intended to talk with the people who drew up, coordinated, and approved the comprehensive programs and plans 13 years ago. But unfortunately, not one of them was to be found in his old post. All the people are new; one has been in charge of the service for between 12 and 18 months, another a little longer.... Leaders at all levels change with amazing rapidity. Who is there to learn those lessons?

'Glasnost Telephones' Established in Mari ASSR

LD0812161788 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1000 GMT 8 Dec 88

[Text] A TASS correspondent has been informed about "glasnost telephones" operating in Mari ASSR. Local leaders have invited the inhabitants of the autonomous republic to a direct telephone link. Such telephones, which make it possible to telephone the staff of various departments and services, already exist in Yoshkar-Ola. And now, the leaders of the oblast party committee, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, the Council of Ministers of the Mari ASSR, the oblast trade-union soviet, and the republican People's Control Committee have been linked by direct telephone to the population. In organizing such telephone dialogues—they will be held weekly on Mondays—it is primarily critical remarks by Communists voiced at the report-back and election party meetings and conferences which are being considered.

Council of Religious Affairs Chairman Interviewed

OW1012171488 Moscow Television Service in Russian 2320 GMT 2 Dec 88

[Interview with K.M. Kharchev, chairman of the Council for Religious Affairs, by O.V. Serkova; date not given—recorded in Kharchev's office]

[Excerpts] [Serkova] Konstantin Mikhaylovich, our letters show that most of the questions pertain to the work of your council. People seem to be at odds. They do not know the function of your council. Some feel that you are there to protect the church, while others feel that you are there to fight it. Briefly, how would you explain the main tasks of your council?

[Kharchev] [passage omitted] This is how I would put it: First, our council is called on, above all else, to defend the rights of the believers and to protect their freedom of conscience. That is, people have the right to practice their religion and to have the necessary material base to do so. At this stage, I would perhaps say that this is our main function. No doubt you know as well as I that in the past mistakes were made in state-church relations. Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev spoke of this during his meeting with the leadership of the Russian Orthodox Church. These mistakes are now being rectified. I would say that now, the relations between the church and the state are becoming normal. In some regards, these relations have not been completely normalized, because in some areas, in some oblasts and krays, the relations are far from normal. However, much has been achieved since the meeting between Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev and the Russian Orthodox Church leadership—a meeting which I consider to be truly historic. [passage omitted]

As you know, between 1961 and 1964 many of our churches were closed. The churches were closed, but the believers remained. [passage omitted] Since the beginning of this year, more than 600 religious organizations have opened. The Muslims, compared to the rest, are lagging behind. It seems that the process of changing the thinking process among the members of the local authorities is slow. [passage omitted]

Unfortunately, we still have many incidents where, following church attendance, the people involved are noted and are then harassed either at trade union or Komsomol meetings.

[Serkova] Isn't this illegal?

[Kharchev] It is not only illegal, it is an outrage. We must seek these incidents out and eliminate them from our midst, because they do not correspond with the freedom of conscience which is guaranteed by our Constitution. [passage omitted]

Voronov New LITERATURNAYA GAZETA Editor

PM1312161688 Moscow LITERATURNAYA GAZETA in Russian 14 Dec 88 p 1

[Unattributed report under general heading "New Creative Successes, Aleksandr Borisovich!"]

[Text] On 8 December the USSR Writers' Union Board Secretariat examined A. Chakovskiy's request to be released from his duties as chief editor of LITERATURNAYA GAZETA.

The USSR Writers' Union Board Secretariat expressed sincere gratitude to A. Chakovskiy for his many years of fruitful labor in this post, and granted his request. Yu. Verchenko, S. Mikhalkov, V. Telpugov, A. Salynskiy, and others who spoke at the secretariat session said that under A. Chakovskiy's leadership the newspaper made a great contribution to the cause of the development of multinational Soviet literature and the resolution of the most important problems of the country's economy, science, and public life.

The USSR Writers' Union Board Secretariat appointed to the post of chief editor of LTIERATURNAYA GAZETA Yuriy Petrovich Voronov, formerly secretary of the USSR Writers' Union Board and chief editor of the journal ZNAMYA, and recently chief of the CPSU Central Committee Culture Department.

Economic

Article Criticizes Waste of Imported Goods

PM0812135388 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 5 Dec 88 Second Edition p 2

[G. Yastrebtsov report under the rubric "Notes From USSR People's Control Committee Session": "Bought With Currency"]

[Text] A few figures for readers' information. Last year more than 31 million tonnes of grain and grain products, 5.1 million tonnes of raw sugar, more than 800,000 tonnes of meat and meat products, 400 million sewn and knitted garments, 140 million pairs of footwear, and many other goods were imported into our country. Overall, the volume of imports of such products totaled 17.7 billion foreign currency rubles. This year it is still more. As we can see, foreign economic organizations operate on a grand scale. But the question is this: Is thrifty use always made of currency?

Scarce Goods With... Defects

During a business trip I made long ago to a European country I had to contact a representative of a Soviet foreign trade organization—a highly educated and self-confident young man. True, he mostly used his commercial abilities to fill his own bags. As regards observing state interests, our businessman's affairs were not proceeding too successfully. Embarrassing things would happen. He himself told me of one of them with a sweet smile. He said he had had a hand in buying artificial leather for women's stocking-boots, which were fashionable at the time. But then our factories were showered with complaints from angry purchasers: It turned out that the leather was meant not for boots but for purses—it fell to pieces when the boots were pulled over the feet....

It was no coincidence that I recalled this tragicomic episode from the stagnation epoch at the last session of the USSR People's Control Committee, for it discussed the same thing—the mistakes that continue to this day in the purchasing of foodstuffs and industrial goods abroad.

Together with local organs the USSR People's Control Committee attentively studied the problem and reached the conclusion that there are serious shortcomings in the organization of purchases of consumer goods and their delivery to the consumers. Leaders of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations, the USSR Ministry of Trade, and the USSR Gosagroprom show little concern for the quality of the goods acquired. The work of the large staff of Soviet specialists and acceptance officers is badly organized abroad. Real work frequently drowns in fruitless bureaucratic correspondence, mutual recriminations, and the defense of purely departmental, apparatus interests. And the sad result is this: Faulty, defective goods continually arrive at seaports and border railroad stations. What do we want with them?

Here are the facts. Last year and in the first 9 months of this year the volume of substandard grain and grain products purchased abroad totaled 4.8 million tonnes. In addition, 21 million tonnes were infested with seeds of plants subject to quarantine. During the same period our country imported more than 223,000 tonnes of vegetables and fruits with deviations from the contracts' technical requirements. For example, of 10,000 tonnes of Bulgarian tomatoes checked at Odessa seaport, 4,300 tonnes did not meet the delivery terms concerning quality, and 134 tonnes had to be written off entirely. Did all this have to be transported? Would it not have been simpler to refuse bad goods on the spot?

According to data of the USSR State Committee for Statistics, during the period of a check 806,000 imported sewn and knitted garments and also 563,000 pairs of footwear were rejected at wholesale bases of union republic trade ministries. In addition, experts of the USSR Chamber of Trade and Industry established that a further 937,000 pairs of imported footwear and 894,000 sewn and knitted garments did not meet the quality terms of contracts.

In fact, we get far more defective "scarce foreign goods," because trade workers and experts of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry carry out only a selective check—approximately 20 percent of all goods coming from abroad. What is more, USSR Trade Ministry specialists scrutinize only external defects, and how many hidden ones come to light later, discovered by the purchasers themselves! During 3 months of this year—July through September—Muscovites, who are not greatly spoiled by trade, were forced to return to the stores almost 13,500 pairs of defective imported footwear and many foreign-made sewn and knitted garments.

Money Thrown to the Wind

Sometimes things purchased abroad do not reach the Soviet consumer at all. As members of the USSR People's Control Committee pointed out, a situation of amazing irresponsibility with regard to the good condition of public property has taken shape over the whole delivery route of imported goods. Obsolete instructions enable economic leaders to easily write off or conceal quite unwarranted losses and cunningly evade personal responsibility for harm caused to the state.

Let us turn once again to examples from life. Because of cracks in the plating on the motorships "Tula" and "Krasnodon" and the subsequent leaks, approximately 3,000 tonnes of sugar was spoiled and 595 tonnes of this product was simply pumped overboard together with the water, sweetening the salt sea. And such barbarity is by no means an exception. Almost every trip with cocoa beans to Tallinn port reveals an extraordinary occurrence—the goods are damp. Over the past 18 months 1,849 tonnes of this costly imported product have been spoiled and devalued in this way. Even according to the minimum assessments, the state has suffered a loss of more than R2 million.

There are also many losses on the railroads. Thus, during the period from January last year through August this year the transportation of grain by train suffered a loss of R3 million. In all, according to data of the USSR State Committee for Statistics, losses of imported goods during transportation exceeded R90 million in a year. Currency, about the need to save which we speak and write such a lot, is simply being thrown to the wind.

It all begins with responsibility or irresponsibility with regard to the entrusted work sector, with a civic, state stance or a narrow departmental, strictly sectoral stance. Here is food for thought. When unloading ships which had arrived in Leningrad seaport from abroad, a shortfall of almost 14,000 tonnes of grain freight was revealed in the first 6 months alone. Where did it "evaporate" to? The captains shrugged their shoulders in reply to this question and, trying to justify themselves to their chiefs, made a note in the appropriate documents to the effect that they, the captains, had not been involved in weighing the freight.

But what about the shipping company? At the shipping company the papers signed by the captains were neatly put away in the appropriate files. People reacted, so to speak. And this is the result. During last year and the first 9 months of this year the grain shortfalls against the documents revealed in the country's seaports totaled 277,600 tonnes, with a value of more than R30 million, while shortfalls of raw sugar totaled 32,500 tonnes, with a value of R20.6 million.

An interesting detail. On seeing such big losses the Foreign Insurance Administration even stopped insuring grain when transported by sea.

There is no greater order on the railroads. Otherwise why sound the alarm and send telegrams from the end stations of routes? People there really are in a panic. In Norilsk, for example, there was a shortfall of French pork sent from Leningrad, and in Chelyabinsk a shortfall of imported beef sent from Riga. And all measured in tonnes or even tens of tonnes—you cannot help sounding all the alarms!

Foreign foodstuffs, of which there is somehow no abundance in our stores, sometimes spend a long time being aimlessly trundled in cars from railroad to railroad, losing weight and quality. During a very short space of time 408 cars arrived at Novorossiysk station with "imported food partly or completely not unloaded at the destinations."

A strange design presents itself. Goods are brought from abroad to a Soviet port, transferred to cars, and forwarded to their destination. If someone needs the freight and if there is even elementary control over the passage of each car, after full unloading this car will go away clean and empty. But sometimes it gets "partly" unloaded or gets "forgotten" altogether. And then so-called freight residue travels around the country. You could not conceive of a more stupid journey.

In the first half of this year 255 cars with such "residue" were sent to Odessa's port station and 146 to Leningrad, and 9 of them were...packed to the very roof with imported grain. These cars had returned to the port from grain combines in Moscow, Leningrad, Murmansk, and Perm, where, by the way, documents relating to a shortfall of imported produce had been neatly drawn up. Some 13 cars fully loaded with grain arrived back at their point of departure from Millerovo station on the North Caucasus Railroad. According to the documents, they were empty. Novorossiysk's "Importpishcheprom" Combine sent a tanker full of vegetable oil which had been acquired abroad to Mushketovo station on the Donetsk Railroad. After traveling the rails for 6 weeks this tanker returned still loaded to the same Novorossiysk station. It figured in the documents as empty.

I could cite similar examples ad infinitum. But it is already clear that there is no order in the realm of transport.

Are the Weighing Machines Alone To Blame?

The leaders of respected departments with deputy ministerial rank invited to the USSR People's Control Committee session took the floor one after another. They did not say a lot, but spoke with authority and weight. Everything is correct, they said, we acknowledge the criticism, we are getting the matter under control, we are working constantly to eliminate individual shortcomings, we are planning appropriate measures.... Mildly and without importunity the speakers mainly emphasized the technical or technological aspects of the problem: Ships in the merchant fleet have grown old, there is a shortage of specialized rolling stock on the railroads, there are old, inaccurate weighing machines in ports and stations. But the participants in the discussion were able to hear little about people, about those specifically to blame for the outrages. But our readers are interested to learn: Who will answer personally in all the severity of the law for this breakdown?

There is no denying that it is very tempting to refer to the antediluvian weighing machines which are said to distort and lie. But are the weighing machines alone to blame? Last February Riga port purchased several sets of very modern electronic-mechanical weighing machines with recording devices made by the West German firm of Bitser [name as transliterated]. And what happened? On the day of the check, that is, 6 months after acquiring these weighing machines, they still were not working. Roughly the same picture obtains with regard to new weighing equipment acquired in the ports of Ventspils and Klaypeda.

Why blame the weighing machines? Would it not be better to take a proprietorial look all around? Flagrant violations of order are visible to the naked eye. During the unloading of grain bought with currency from motorships in that same Klaypeda piles of it cover not just the ships' decks but also the wharves' concrete flags. People once swept out the corners and grain bins there and discovered as much as 273 tonnes of abandoned grain, and then a further 249 tonnes. There are also dusty piles of wheat on the ground near the railroad in other places that are hardly convenient for storage. As though this were someone else's grain, not brought over the sea for us.

All kinds of rogues have a great time in such a "no-one-responsible" atmosphere. It was pointed out at the USSR People's Control Committee session that MVD workers and subordinate organs far from always expose and suppress thefts in transport. And not only foreigners but also "our own" people steal. In Novorossiysk not so long ago homegrown plotters made off with two sacks of coffee and six sacks of sugar when unloading the motorship "Boris Babochkin."

Proceedings were instituted against 36 people for minor thefts in Riga port in 1987, including 29 port workers. During the first 6 months of this year alone 32 port workers had already been "registered" as pilferers. Who are they? Seemingly respected people, including leaders. Engineer Prelovich, controller Akshanov, and first mate Sharando, for example, prefer to steal citrus fruits, while militarized guard worker Bakhtin took a crate of imported butter with him when he went off duty.

In the ports of Odessa and Ilichevsk 64 workers were arrested in a short space of time for trying to steal foodstuffs and industrial goods that had arrived from abroad. But how many others were not arrested? For the militarized guard in that same port of Odessa guards only the checkpoints, while such important installations as the container terminal, the warehouses, and other places are not provided with guard alarms or posts. We save rubles but lose millions.

Departmental disunity and the lack of a reliable economic mechanism for controlling shipments in the country lead to tremendous losses owing to mismanagement in the delivery and storage of freight, including imported freight. The USSR People's Control Committee sternly pointed out to leaders of ministries and departments the need to rectify the situation. There was also talk of creating, at last, a unified economically accountable organization which will be able to instill order in the delivery and forwarding of goods purchased abroad.

This is, so to speak, looking to the future. But what is to be done today, now—are we really to continue throwing money to the wind like this?

Agricultural

PRAVDA Editorial Views Food Problems

PM1612104188 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 15 Dec 88 Second Edition p 1

[Editorial: "Managing the Economy Effectively Means Asserting New Economic Relations in the Countryside"]

[Text] The year is coming to an end and we are naturally asking how much closer it has brought the country to the solution of topical problems, first among which is the food problem. The agro-industrial complex is surrounded not by a semblance of attention but by the genuine concern of the party and entire people. More effort and funds than ever are being invested in its priority development. Is the return a large one?

Many rural collectives have succeeded in taking a step forward. Purchases of milk and meat have as a whole risen 4 percent. And each percent is hundreds of thousands of tons of output. In mastering new economic relations, the field and stockraising unit workers are seeking to obtain more food at the cost of the least effort. How much more effectively and productively those people are working who have become the full masters of the land, stockraising premises, and equipment.

Nonetheless there has been no breakthrough in the population's provision with food. The shelves of many stores have not become more abundantly stocked. Moreover, the meat stockraising units of Georgia, Tajikistan, and Astrakhan and Orenburg Oblasts have reduced output deliveries. The stock raisers of Estonia, Northern Osetia, Udmurtia, and Kuybyshev and Chelyabinsk Oblasts sold the state less milk than last year. And ahead are the difficult months of the livestock's wintering, and forage stocks in a number of places are meager. The year has been an unsuccessful one for the arable farmers who have been unable this year to grow sufficient feed, grain, potatoes, and vegetables. Over the first 11 months of the year the enterprises of the agro-industrial complex have been responsible for an output shortfall of R[figure illegible] million. In particular, arrears for sugar, vegetable oil, and canned fruit and vegetables are great.

But you cannot explain these breakdowns solely by weather conditions. Especially as under virtually the same conditions collectives that have mastered leading methods of economic management have continued to build up production output. Why is it far from everywhere that the transition to leasing and the contract is being accompanied by a marked increase in output? It would seem that the leasing collectives operating on every third farm should drastically change the situation. Nonetheless economic relations are often structured in the old way. To judge by numerous letters from lessees to the editorial office, the new methods of organizing labor have often been introduced only on paper. People have not actually obtained economic autonomy and they are often seen as self-seekers. An unhealthy atmosphere is being created around resourceful, enterprising workers. Many specialists are passive, having failed to define their place in leasing relations. The contradictions are increasingly acute and implacable between progressive forms of organizing production and the obsolete internal farm structure of the majority of kolkhozes and sovkhozes. The rural party organizations lack persistence and consistency in propagandizing and supporting new economic relations.

It is not enough to call for restructuring. You will not change the situation with the most correct, noisy words. The main thing is for every person to have the opportunity to work in a fully productive way and to be interested in a good end result. Where this has not been achieved the additional resources earmarked for intensive technologies will bring no marked return of any kind. Deviations from agricultural practices and disregard for scientific recommendations lead to the pointless expenditure of efforts and assets and frequently to more expensive output. The blunders of the grain growers who were unable to make full use of the advantages of intensive methods are particularly obvious this year.

As is well known, the neglect of the processing sectors and the backwardness of the storage base are also making the food problem acute. Large-scale measures have been taken to eliminate investment distortions and the production of equipment has been assigned to defense industry enterprises. But the food industry workers themselves could substantially reduce losses, improve the quality of articles, and expand their range. After all at many enterprises the output from 1 tonne of raw material is low, in-depth processing has not been assimilated, poor use is made of existing capacities, and highly productive equipment stands idle for a long time or is not installed. The "residual principle" when erecting food industry establishments is still current. The glucose and syrup combine in Yefremov, Tula Oblast, has been under construction for 16 years. The normative schedules for installing the meat combines in Torbeyevo, Mordovian ASSR, and Kalach, Voronezh Oblast have been exceeded by a factor of four.

As of this year a considerable proportion of kolkhozes, sovkhozes, and enterprises of the agro-industrial complex switched to self financing. Far from all of them have succeeded in strengthening the economy and intensifying economic accountability [khozraschet]. Over 200 farms, associations, and plants have even been declared bankrupt. Why has an end not been put to thriftlessness and disorganization? Leaders and specialists have still failed to master economic methods of management and exert only feeble influence on the cost cutting mechanism. Can we speak seriously of the introduction of economic accountability where workers have no idea of the prime cost of output and the remuneration of their labor is not linked to the end result?

People rightly judge the agro-industrial complex' successes or blunders by the food shelves. Striking contrasts are discovered if you compared food supplies in a particular region. There are still many oblasts which still receive subsidies from the state although the potential for satisfying the population's requirements for meat, milk, and vegetables from their own production exist virtually everywhere. For instance, in Yaroslavl Oblast they have been obliged to bring in meat products from outside. Per capita meat production there is 2.5 times less than in the Orel area. The local party and soviet organs must no longer tolerate parasitical sentiments and must take specific, resolute measures to switch to self sufficiency.

Every economic leader knows how alive in the countryside are methods of management based on administration through command. It is difficult to rid ourselves of stereotypes that have been entrenched for decades. Fussing with sessions and paper work is sometimes the main content of the work of the rayon agro-industrial associations. The rayon agro-industrial committee is being restructured only slowly. And even new formations—combines, firms, and associations on a cooperative basis—sometimes adopt the former arbitrary methods of economic management. They are not ceasing to issue orders to the countryside, especially where they are not bothering to resolve the most urgent questions of the supply and processing of output and the technical servicing of kolkhozes and sovkhozes.

The food problem remains a very important concern of the party organizations. Many party raykoms and obkoms have released rural leaders from petty economic tutelage. But that does not mean that they have eased their demands or the leaders' responsibility for the state of affairs. What is impeding the new economic mechanism, who is stubbornly clinging to old methods? —these questions should constantly concern Communists. It is necessary to painstakingly explain to people the place and role of the lease and the cooperative movement in modern production relations and to destroy obsolete ideas of these forms of economic management.

While resolving long-term tasks we must not underestimate current ones. The wintering of the livestock and the preparation of the future harvest require considerable exertion. In November the stockraising units of the Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and Belorussia allowed a decline in production output compared with last year's level. On whose conscience are the blunders? We must investigate and eliminate the reasons for the breakdown and achieve the stable operation of every collective. And everything must be done to ensure that a person feels daily more confident in his role as the true master on the land and in the stockraising unit.

Scientific

Further Reportage on Joint French Space Flight

'Minilab' Experiment Performed

LD1412121988 Moscow TASS in English 1116 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 14 TASS—Under the programme of the Soviet-French space flight, Aleksandr Volkov, Sergey Krikalev and Jean-Loup Chretien continued space medicine research today.

The Minilab experiment was performed in the morning to study the peculiarities of metabolic processes in the human organsim in space flight conditions.

The purpose of Physalie and Viminal experiments is to obtain data on the work capacity and sensory motor physiological reactions of the cosmonauts.

The international crew commander and the French cosmonaut will undergo a thorough examination of the cardiovascular system by means of the multi-functional gamma recording installation.

Provision is also made for geophysical experiments to determine the optical characteristics of terrestrial atmosphere and a television reportage from on board the orbital complex. In preparation for return to Earth Vladimir Titov and Musa Manarov will hold training sessions with the use of the Chiblis pneumatic vacuum space suit.

According to results of medical check-ups conducted daily by Doctor Valeriy Polyakov, all cosmonauts are in good health and retain a high capacity for work.

'Minilab' Progress Discussed

LD1512111188 Moscow TASS in English 1036 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Moscow December 15 TASS—Vladimir Titov, Musa Manarov, Valeriy Polyakov, Aleksandr Volkov, Sergey Krikalev, and Jean-Loup Chretien are carrying on their joint work aboard the orbital complex "Mir".

In the first communications session this morning the cosmonauts broadcast a television reportage on the progress of the minilab experiment. During the experiment, Doctor Valeriy Polyakov took a venous blood sample from Jean-Loup Chretian for subsequent laboratory analysis on Earth. The results of the research in conjunction with an echographic examination will make it possible to glean more complete data on the functional condition of human organism at different states of space flight.

A regular series of measurements of ionizing cosmic radiation along the flight path of the orbital complex will be made during the day.

According to crew reports and telemetry data the work in orbit is proceeding according to programme. The cosmonauts are working concertedly and are in high spirits.

Cosmonauts Set Endurance Record

LD1412154088 Moscow TASS in English 1535 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Excerpt] Moscow December 14 TASS—Soviet cosmonauts Vladimir Titov and Musa Manarov today set a new space endurance record of 359 days, a TASS correspondent was told at the Mission Control Centre.

The previous record was set by Yuriy Romanenko who stayed in space 326 days, or rather 326 days 11 hours 38 minutes.

A space endurance record must exceed the previous figure by a minimum of 10 percent to be confirmed. So Titov and Manarov had to stay in space at least 359 days 3 hours 12 minutes to break the record.

This happened at 5:30 p.m. Moscow time today. [passage omitted]

Military

Soldiers Eye Prospect of Force Reductions

PM1512132588 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 15 Dec 88 First Edition p 2

[Readers' letters feature under the general heading: "In The State's Interests"; first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] M.S. Gorbachev's speech at the United Nations, which proclaimed large-scale USSR peace initiatives aimed at improving the international situation, met with a great public response. The reactions received by the editorial office illustrate that Soviet people understand and approve these initiatives and the decision on unilaterally reducing the Soviet Armed Forces. At the same time a number of readers, primarily servicemen, are concerned in purely human terms about their future and express their ideas and proposals in this connection.

Defense Capability Must Be Reliable

I am attentively following the reactions to M.S. Gorbachev's UN speech. The world is increasingly mastering the new political thinking. I think that the Soviet initiatives and our country's real steps toward arms reduction will be a powerful boost to this.

Our new initiatives met with profound understanding from my comrades—students at the V.I. Lenin Military-Political Academy. We find that they fully accord with the Warsaw Pact states' new doctrine. This is yet another step across the barrier of mistrust between countries in the sphere of military building. Will other states follow our example? Many officers are now asking this question. Remember recent history. A few years ago our opponents would not even hear of reductions in nuclear offensive arms. What about today? A whole class of missiles is being destroyed and treaty obligations are being fulfilled irreproachably. The peoples are acquiring increasing confidence in the world's future due to the warming of the international climate.

No one, of course, is relieving us military men of responsibility for maintaining the country's defense capability. We realize that it must remain at the level of reasonable and reliable sufficiency. Under conditions of reductions in the Armed Forces the question of boosting the skill, training, and professionalism of the defenders of the homeland arises even more acutely. There are also great opportunities for this in our academies. A modern army needs progressively minded people, active and energetic people.

[Signed] Captain V. Matyash, student at the V.I. Lenin Military-Political Academy

Showing Concern for Daily Life Also

I realize that the upcoming reduction in our Armed Forces is an event of world significance and illustrates the Soviet country's desire for peace. However, I must be honest and say that it is difficult for me to get attuned to reductions. This is not because I will be unable to find a suitable job in civilian life. For instance, I am a specialist in motor vehicle repairs and have a knowledge of other specialties and I am convinced that I will not be left unemployed. Nor will other officers from our air defense unit—many of them are engineers working with complex electronic and other equipment—be left unemployed if they are discharged. I am saying this because you constantly year people say that servicemen oppose the reduction since they aren't fit for anything apart from their own purely professional job.

At the same time it will not be so simple for many of us to restructure ourselves mentally. The army has its own atmosphere and its own traditions.... It is hard to wrench oneself away from them. We are awaiting the reduction in some trepidation because there is a great deal that is unclear with regard to changing our place of residence and obtaining apartments. For instance, more than 20 families of officers who have long since been discharged into the reserve but who have not yet received housing are still living in our closed camps. What will happen if we start discharging people under the reduction? After all, they can't spend the rest of their lives "at the base"! The accommodation has to be vacated for people in the service. I would like the appropriate officials to show timely concern for these and other problems.

[Signed] Guards Colonel S. Tokalenko

An Individual Approach Is Needed [subhead]

Now, when we are preparing for practical steps to reduce the Armed Forces, the following question is arising increasingly insistently among officers and ensigns: Won't this action, which is altogether very necessary for improving the international situation, mean "shattered lives" for many people and won't officers be discharged merely because, for instance, the unit in which they are serving is to be disbanded? I would very much like to read the opinion of competent comrades in KRASNAYA ZVEZDA on this subject. It would not be a bad thing perhaps to put this problem forward for mass discussion by the readers since people have many sensible suggestions.

For instance, I think that officers who have themselves expressed a desire to enter the reserves should be the first to be discharged. For it must be admitted that we have hung on to such people for a long time by hook or by crook. But what's the point? We must also get rid of people who haven't "pulled their weight" for a long time. But the following condition must be mandatory here: These people must be found work that is suited to their capabilities and to their taste.

[Signed] Lieutenant Colonel E. Mayatskin, Group of Soviet Forces in Germany

I Want To Warn You....

Like everyone, I regard the Soviet Government's decision on unilaterally reducing the Armed Forces by 500,000 men as a guarantee of international stability and of a future world without wars and military danger. But as a lawyer and a former military man I cannot fail to caution against the mistakes that were made under Khrushchev, when our Army also underwent large reductions. Lack of thought and the voluntarist way in which this important political and state act was carried out turned into a real drama for many people then and had an adverse effect on the quality of the Armed Forces.

From experience, I reckon that special commissions created in formations should determine the candidacies of officers, ensigns, and warrant officers to be reduced rather than what happened before—everything was decided by workers in cadre organs on the basis of quotas issued from above. These commissions must be made up not only of representatives of the command, cadre workers, and political organ representatives but also of workers from military prosecutor's offices, which will make it possible to exclude protectionism and other negative elements that occurred before. These commissions should have one main task—to preserve the most worthy cadres of servicemen for the USSR Armed Forces.

Moreover—and this would accord with the spirit of the rule-of-law state—all of the men to be discharged must be guaranteed the right to appeal against the commission's decision. I think that this would make it possible to ensure the very strict observance of legality and humanity. Such questions as granting privileges to those discharged into the reserve and providing them with housing and resettlement must be resolved at state level.

[Signed] Major General of Justice (Retired) P. Barabolya, honored RSFSR lawyer

Fitting Implementation

M.S. Gorbachev's UN speech points out that the Soviet Armed Forces will be reduced by 800 combat aircraft in the European part of the country and on the territory of our European allies. Here is what I thought when I read those lines:

Given the considerable reduction in our Armed Forces that has been announced, many officers who have honestly fulfilled their military duty will be discharged into the reserve. I would like to prevent commanders and cadre organ workers from approaching this question indiscriminately and pursuing high figures for the fulfillment of the discharge plan merely for the sake of the report and ensure that they display justice, principledness, and sensitivity to people. And let there be more glasnost and democratism!

[Signed] Lieutenant Colonel (Reserve) A. Petsenchuk. Moscow Oblast